

FURTHER
MEMORIES
By LORD REDESDALE





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FURTHER MEMORIES

BY

LORD REDESDALE

G.C.V.O., G.C.B.



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FURTHER MEMORIES

LORD REDESDALE'S FURTHER MEMORIES

INTRODUCTION

BY EDMUND GOSSE, C. B.

THE publication of Lord Redesdale's "Memories"—which was one of the most successful autobiographies of recent times—familiarized thousands of readers with the principal adventures of a very remarkable man, but, when all was said and done, left an incomplete impression of his tastes and occupations on the minds of those who were not familiar with his earlier writings. His literary career had been a very irregular one. He took up literature rather late, and produced a book that has become a classic—"Tales of Old Japan." He did not immediately pursue this success, but became involved in public activities of many kinds, which distracted his attention. In his sixtieth year he brought out "The Bamboo Garden," and from that time—until, in his eightieth year, he died in full intellectual energy—he constantly devoted himself to the art of writing. His zeal, his ambition, were wonderful; but it was impossible to overlook the disadvantage from which that ambition and that zeal suffered in the fact that for the first sixty years of his life the writer had cultivated the art but casually and sporadically. He retained, in spite of all the labour which he expended, a certain stiffness, an air of the amateur, of which he himself was always acutely conscious.

This did not interfere with the direct and sincere ap-

peal made to general attention by the 1915 "Memories," a book so full of geniality and variety, so independent in its judgments and so winning in its ingenuousness, that its wider popularity could be the object of no surprise. But, to those who knew Lord Redesdale intimately, it must always appear that his autobiography fails to explain him from what we may call the subjective point of view. It tells us of his adventures and friendships, of the strange lands he visited and of the unexpected confidences he received, but it does not reveal very distinctly the man himself. There is far more of his intellectual constitution, of his personal tastes and mental habits, in the volume of essays of 1912, called "A Tragedy in Stone," but even here much is left unsaid and even unsuggested.

Perhaps the most remarkable fact about Lord Redesdale was the redundant vitality of his character. His nature swarmed with life, like a drop of pond-water under a microscope. There cannot be found room in any one nature for all the qualities, and what he lacked in some degree was concentration. But very few men who have lived in our complicated age have done well in so many directions as he, or, aiming widely, have failed in so few. He shrank from no labour and hesitated before no difficulty, but pushed on with an extraordinary energy along many various lines of activity. But the two lines in which he most desired and most determined to excel, gardening and authorship, are scarcely to be discerned, except below the surface, in his "Memories." Next to his books, what he regarded with most satisfaction was his wonderful garden at Batsford, and of this there is scarcely a word of record in the autobiography. He had always intended to celebrate this garden, and when he was preparing to return to

Batsford in 1915 he wrote to me that he was going to write an "Apologia pro Horto meo," as long before he had composed one "pro Bambusis meis." A book which should combine with the freest fancies of his intellect a picture of the exotic groves of Batsford was what was required to round off Lord Redesdale's literary adventures. It will be seen that he very nearly succeeded in thus setting the top-stone on his literary career.

One reason, perhaps, why Batsford, which was ever present to his thoughts, is so very slightly and vaguely mentioned in Lord Redesdale's "Memories," may be the fact that from 1910 onwards he was not living in it himself, and that it was irksome to him to magnify in print horticultural beauties which were for the time being in the possession of others. The outbreak of the war, in which all his five sons were instantly engaged, was the earliest of a series of changes which completely altered the surface of Lord Redesdale's life. Batsford came once more into his personal occupation, and at the same time it became convenient to give up his London house in Kensington Court. Many things combined to transform his life in the early summer of 1915. His eldest son, Major the Hon. Clement Mitford, after brilliantly distinguished himself in battle, was received by the King and decorated, to the rapturous exultation of his father. Major Mitford returned to the French front, only to fall on the 13th of May, 1915.

At this time I was seeing Lord Redesdale very frequently, and I could not but be struck by the effect of this blow upon his temperament. After the first shock of sorrow, I observed in him the determination not to allow himself to be crushed. His dominant vitality asserted itself almost with violence, and he seemed to clench his teeth in defiance of the blow to his individu-

ality. It required on the part of so old a man no little fortitude, for it is easier to bear a great and heroic bereavement than to resist the wearing vexation of seeing one's system of daily occupation crumbling away. Lord Redesdale was pleased to be going again to Batsford, which had supplied him in years past with so much sumptuous and varied entertainment, but it was a matter of alarm with him to give up all, or almost all, the various ties with London which had meant so much to his vividly social nature.

Meanwhile, during the early months of 1915 in London, he had plenty of employment in finishing and revising his "Memories," which it had taken him two years to write. This was an occupation which bridged over the horrid chasm between his old active life in London, with its thousand interests, and the uncertain and partly dreaded prospect of an exile in the bamboo-gardens of a remote corner of Gloucestershire, where his deafness must needs exclude him from the old activities of local life.

He finished revising the manuscript of his "Memories" in July, and then went down, while the actual transference of his home took place, to the Royal Yacht Squadron Castle, Cowes, where he had been accustomed to spend some of the most enjoyable hours of his life. But this scene, habitually thronged with people, and palpitating with gaiety, in the midst of which Lord Redesdale found himself so singularly at home, was now, more than perhaps any other haunt of the English sportsman, in complete eclipse. The weather was lovely, but there were no yachts, no old chums, no charming ladies. "It is very dull," he wrote; "the sole inhabitant of the Club besides myself was Lord Falkland, and now he is gone." In these conditions Lord Redesdale became suddenly con-

scious that the activity of the last two or three years was over, that the aspect of his world had changed, and that he was in danger of losing that hold upon life to which he so resolutely clung. In conditions of this kind he always turned to seek for something mentally "craggy," as Byron said, and at Cowes he wonderfully found the writings of Nietzsche. The result is described in a remarkable letter to myself (July 28th, 1915), which I quote because it marks the earliest stage in the composition of his last unfinished book:

"I have been trying to occupy myself with Nietzsche, on the theory that there must be something great about a man who exercised the immense influence that he did. But I confess I am no convert to any of his various moods. Here and there I find gems of thought but one has to wade through a morass of blue mud to get at them. Here is a capital saying of his which may be new to you—in a letter to his friend Rohde he writes: 'Eternally we need midwives in order to be delivered of our thoughts.' We cannot work in solitude. 'Woe to us who lack the sunlight of a friend's presence.'

"How true that is! When I come down here, I think that with so much time on my hands I shall be able to get through a pile of work. Not a bit of it! I find it difficult even to write a note. To me it is an imperative necessity to have the sympathetic counsel of a friend."

The letter continued with an impassioned appeal to his correspondent to find some definite intellectual work for him to undertake. "You make me dare, and that is much towards winning a game. You must sharpen my wits, which are blunt enough just now." In short,

it was a cry from the island of boredom to come over the water and administer first-aid.

Accordingly, I started for Cowes, and was welcomed at the pier with all my host's habitual and vivacious hospitality. Scarcely were we seated in our wicker-chairs in face of the Solent, not twinkling as usual with pleasure-sails, but sinister with strange instruments of warfare, than he began the attack. "What am I to do with myself?" was the instant question; "what means can I find of occupying this dreadful void of leisure?" To which the obvious reply was: "First of all, you must exhibit to me the famous attraction of Cowes!" "There are none," he replied in comic despair, but we presently invented some, and my visit, which extended over several radiant days of a perfect August, was diversified with walks and excursions by land and water in which my companion was as active and as ardent as though he had been nineteen instead of seventy-nine. In a suit picturesquely marine, with his beautiful silver hair escaping from a jaunty yachting cap, he was the last expression of vivacity and gaiety.

The question of his intellectual occupation in the future came, however, incessantly to the front; and our long talks in the strange and uncanny solitude of the Royal Yacht Squadron Castle always came back to this: What task was he to take up next? His large autobiography was now coming back to him from the printers in packets of proof, with which he was closeted night and morning; and I suggested that while this was going on there was no need for him to think about future enterprises. To tell the truth, I had regarded the "Memories" as likely to be the final labour of Lord Redesdale's busy life. It seemed to me that at his advanced age he might now well withdraw into dignified

repose. I even hinted so much in terms as delicate as I could make them, but the suggestion was not well received. I became conscious that there was nothing he was so little prepared to welcome as "repose;" that, in fact, the terror which possessed him was precisely the dread of having to withdraw from the stage of life. His deafness, which now began to be excessive, closed to his eager spirit so many of the avenues of experience, that he was more than ever anxious to keep clear those that remained to him, and of these, literary expression came to be almost the only one left. In the absence of a definite task his path in this direction led through darkness.

But it was not until after several suggestions and many conversations that light was found. The friend so pressingly appealed to returned to London, where he was stern in rejecting several projects, hotly flung at his head and then coldly abandoned. A study of the Empress Maria Theresa, suggested by a feverish perusal of Pechler, was the latest and least attractive of these. Lord Redesdale then frankly demanded that a subject should be found for him. "You have brought this upon yourself," he said, "by encouraging me to write. What might prove the scheme of a very pleasant book then occurred to us, and it was suggested to the fiery and impatient author, who had by this time retired for good to Batsford, that he should compose a volume of essays dealing with things in general, but bound together by a constantly repeated reference to his wild garden of bamboos and the Buddha in his secret grove. The author was to suppose himself seated with a friend on the terrace at the top of the garden, and to let the idea of the bamboo run through the whole tissue of reflections and reminiscences like an emerald thread. Lord

Redesdale was enchanted, and the idea took fire at once. He replied:

"You are Orpheus, with his lute moving the rocks and stones! I shall work all my conceits into your plan, and am now proceeding to my garden shrine to meditate on it. I will try to make a picture of the VELUVANA, the bamboo garden which was the first Vikara or monastery of Buddha and his disciples. There I will sit, and, looking on the great statue of Buddha in meditation, I shall begin to arrange all sorts of wild imaginings which may come into my crazy brain."

In this way was started the book, of which, alas! only such fragments were composed as form the earlier part of the present volume. It is, however, right to point out that for the too-brief remainder of his life Lord Redesdale was eagerly set on the scheme of which a hint has just been given. The *Veluvana* was to be the crowning production of his literary life, and to sum up the wisdom of the East and the gaiety of the West. He spoke of it incessantly, in letters and conversation. "That will do to go into *Veluvana*," was his cry when he met with anything rare or strange. For instance, on the 15th of September, 1915, he wrote to me:

"To-day, all of a sudden I was struck by the idea that plants, having many human qualities, may also in some degree have human motives—that they are not altogether mere automata—and as I thought, I began to imagine that I could detect something resembling purpose in the movements of certain plants. I have jotted down a few notes, and you will see when I expand them that at any rate the idea calls

attention to the movements themselves, some of which seem never to have been noticed at all, or certainly at best very inadequately. You will see that this brings in the bamboo garden and Buddha, and so keeps to the scheme of *Veluvana*."

The monasteries of twelfth-century Japanese Buddhism, which he had visited long before in the neighbourhood of Kioto, now recurred to his memory, and he proposed to describe in what a monk of Hiyeisan differed from an Indian Buddhist monk. This was a theme of extraordinary interest, and wholly germane to his purpose. It drove him back to his Japanese books, and to his friend Sir Ernest Satow's famous dictionary. He wrote to me:

"No praise can be too high for the work which Satow did in the early days of our intercourse with Japan. He was a valuable asset to England, and to Sir Harry Parkes, who, with all his energy and force of character, would never have succeeded as he did without Satow. Aston was another very strong man."

His reveries were strictly in accordance with the spirit of *Veluvana*, but unfortunately what Lord Redesdale wrote in this direction proves to be too slight for publication. He met with some expressions of extremely modern Japanese opinion which annoyed him, and to which he was tempted to give more attention than they deserve. It began to be obvious that the enterprise was one for which great concentration of effort, and a certain serenity of purpose which was not to be secured at will, were imperatively needed. In leaving London, he was not content, and no one could have wished him to

be willing, to break abruptly all the cords of his past life. He was still a Trustee of the National Gallery, still chairman of the Marlborough Club, still occupied with the administration of the Wallace Collection, and he did not abate his interest in these directions. They made it necessary that he should come up to town every other week. This made up in some measure for the inevitable disappointment of finding that in Gloucestershire his deafness now completely cut him off from all the neighbourly duties which had in earlier years diversified and entertained his country life. He had been a great figure among the squires and farmers of the Cotswolds, but all this was now at an end, paralysed by the hopeless decay of his hearing. It grieved him, too, that he was unable to do any useful war-work in the county, and he was forced to depend upon his pen and his flying visits to London for refreshment. He was a remarkably good letter-writer, and he now demanded almost pathetically to be fed with the apples of correspondence. He wrote (November 26th, 1915):

“Your letters are a consolation for being deprived of taking a part any longer in the doings of the great world. The Country Mouse—even if the creature were able to scuttle back into the cellars of the great—would still be out of all communion with the mighty owing to physical infirmity. And now comes the kind Town Mouse and tells him all that he most cares to know.”

He had books and his garden to enjoy, and he made the most of both. “I hate the autumn,” he said, “for it means the death of the year, but I try to make the death of the garden as beautiful as possible.” Among his plants, and up and down the high places of his

bamboo-feathered rockeries, where little cascades fell with a music which he could no longer hear into small dark pools full of many-coloured water-lilies, his activity was like that of a boy. He had the appearance, the tastes, the instincts of vigorous manhood prolonged far beyond the usual limit of such gifts, and yet all were marred and rendered bankrupt for him by the one intolerable defect, the deafness which had by this time become almost impenetrable to sound.

Yet it seemed as though this disability actually quickened his mental force. With the arrival of his eightieth year, his activity and curiosity of intellect was certainly rather increased than abated. He wrote to me from Batsford (December 28th, 1915):

“I have been busy for the last two months making a close study of Dante. I have read all the *Inferno* and half of the *Purgatorio*. It is hard work, but the ‘readings’ of my old schoolfellow, W. W. Vernon, are an incalculable help, and now within the last week or two has appeared Hoare’s Italian Dictionary, published by the Cambridge University Press. A much-needed book, for the previous dictionaries were practically useless except for courier’s work. How splendid Dante is! But how sickening are the Commentators, Benvenuto da Imola, Schartazzini and the rest of them? They won’t let the poet say that the sun shone or the night was dark without seeing some hidden and mystic meaning in it. They always seem to *chercher midi à quatorze heures*, and irritate me beyond measure. There is invention enough in Dante without all their embroidery. But this grubbing and grouting seems to be infectious among Dante scholars—they all catch the disease.”

He flung himself into these Italian studies with all his accustomed ardour. He corresponded with the eminent veteran of Dante scholarship, the Honourable W. W. Vernon, whom he mentions in the passage just quoted, and Mr. Vernon's letters gave him great delight. He wrote to me again:

"This new object in life gives me huge pleasure. Of course, I knew the catch quotations in Dante, but I never before attempted to read him. The difficulty scared me."

Now, on the contrary, the difficulty was an attraction. He worked away for hours at a time, braving the monotonies of the *Purgatorio* without flagging, but he broke down early in the *Paradiso*. He had no sympathy whatever with what is mystic and spiritual, and he was extremely bored by the Beatific Vision and the Rose of the Empyrean. I confess I took advantage of this to recall his attention to the *Veluvana*, for which it was no longer possible to hope that the author would collect any material out of Dante.

An invitation from Cambridge to lecture there on Russian history during the Long Vacation of 1916 was a compliment to the value of the Russian chapters of his "Memories," but it was another distraction. It took his thoughts away from *Veluvana*, although he protested to me that he could prepare his Cambridge address, and yet continue to marshal his fancies for the book. Perhaps I doubted it, and dared to disapprove, for he wrote (March 17th, 1916):

"You scold me for writing too much. That is the least of my troubles! You must remember that debarred as I am from taking part in society,

the Three R's alone remain to me, and, indeed, of those only two—for owing to my having enjoyed an Eton education in days when arithmetic was deemed to be no part of the intellectual panoply of a gentleman, I can neither add, subtract, nor divide! I am a gluttonous reader, and only write from time to time."

He was really composing more actively than he himself realized. About this time he wrote:

"Just now I am busy trying to whitewash Lord Hertford—not the Marquess of Steyne, that would be impossible—but the unhappy hypochondriac recluse of the Rue Lafitte, who I believe has been most malignantly traduced by the third-rate English Colony in Paris—all his faults exaggerated, none of his good qualities even hinted at. The good British public has so long been used to look upon him as a minotaur that it will perhaps startle and amuse it to be told that he had many admirable points."

At the beginning of last year the aspect of Lord Redesdale was very remarkable. He had settled down into his life at Batsford, diversified by the frequent dashes to London. His years seemed to sit upon him more lightly than ever. His azure eyes, his curled white head thrown back, the almost jaunty carriage of his well-kept figure, were the external symbols of an inner man perpetually fresh, ready for adventure and delighted with the pageant of existence. He found no fault at all with life, save that it must leave him, and he had squared his shoulders not to give way to weakness. Perhaps the only sign of weakness was just that visible determination to be strong. But the features of his character had

none of those mental wrinkles, those "*rides de l'esprit*," which Montaigne describes as proper to old age. Lord Redesdale was guiltless of the old man's self-absorption or exclusive interest in the past. His curiosity and sympathy were vividly exhibited to his friends, and so, in spite of his amusing violence in denouncing his own forgetfulness, was his memory of passing events. In the petulance of his optimism he was like a lad.

There was no change in the early part of last year, although it was manifest that the incessant journeying between Batsford and London was exhausting. The garden occupied him more and more, and he was distracted by the great storm of the end of March, which blew down and destroyed at the head of the bridge the wonderful group of cypresses, which he called "the pride of my old age." But, after a gesture of despair, he set himself energetically to repair the damage. He was in his usual buoyant health when the very hot spell in May tempted him out on the 18th of May, with his agent, Mr. Kennedy, to fish at Swinbrook, a beautiful village on his Oxfordshire property, of which he was particularly fond. He was not successful, and in a splenetic mood he flung himself at full length upon a bank of wet grass. He was not allowed to remain there long, but the mischief was done, and in a few hours he was suffering from a bad cold. Even now, the result might not have been serious had it not been that in a few days' time he was due to fulfil certain engagements in town. Nothing vexed Lord Redesdale more than not to keep a pledge. In all such matters he prided himself on being punctual and trustworthy, and he refused to change his plans by staying at home.

Accordingly, on the 23rd of May he came to London to transact some business, and to take the chair on the

24th of May at a meeting of the Royal Society of Literature, of which he was a vice-president. This meeting took place in the afternoon, and he addressed a crowded assembly, which greeted him with great warmth. Those who were present, and saw his bright eyes and heard his ringing voice, could have no suspicion that they would see him again no more. His intimate friends alone perceived that he was making a superlative effort. There followed a very bad night, and he went down to Batsford next day, going straight to his bed, from which he never rose again. His condition, at first, gave rise to little alarm. The disease, which proved to be catarrhal jaundice, took its course; but for a long time his spirit and his unconsciousness of danger sustained him and filled those around him with hope. There was no disturbance of mind to the very last. In a shaky hand, with his stylograph, he continued to correspond with certain friends, about politics, and books, and even about *Veluvana*. In the beginning of August there seemed to be symptoms of improvement, but these were soon followed by a sudden and final relapse. Even after this, Lord Redesdale's interest and curiosity were sustained. In his very last letter to myself, painfully scrawled only one week before his death, he wrote:

“Have you seen Ernest Daudet's book just published, ‘Les auteurs de la guerre de 1914’? Bismarck is the subject of the first volume; the second will deal with the Kaiser and the Emperor Joseph; and the third with ‘leurs complices.’ I know E. D.; he is a brother of Alphonse, and is a competent historian. His book is most illuminating. Of course there are exaggerations, but he is always well *documenté*, and there is much in his work that is

new. I don't admire his style. The abuse of the historic present is bad enough, but what can be said in favour of the historic future with which we meet at every step? It sets my teeth on edge."

But he grew physically weaker, and seven days later he passed into an unconscious state, dying peacefully at noon of the 17th of August, 1916. He was saved, as he had wished to be, from all consciousness of decrepitude.

EDMUND GOSSE.

CHAPTER I

VELUVANA

THESE chapters are simply an attempt to record the gist of some conversations and noonday thoughts, which have arisen from time to time in idle moments spent in a garden on the Cotswold Hills, where there are gathered together certain features unusual in Western pleasantries. Our thoughts are largely the creations of our surroundings, and when at every step I am met by some work of art or a plant which has travelled perhaps twelve thousand miles to give me a greeting from afar, then I, too, begin to travel and am carried away beyond the seas. If here and there I think and talk of things nearer home, my thoughts are still those of the wanderer—still those which are suggested by the mysterious thrilling of one of those chords for which there is nothing to account, but which never vibrate as they do in my Veluvana, the bamboo grove of Buddha, which thus becomes a temple dedicated to Mnemosyne.

One thing I wish to disclaim. I am often told that people believe that I have a Japanese garden. I have nothing of the kind. A Japanese garden

is a mystery hard to be understood; it is a work of art depending upon certain fixed laws and canons prescribed, many centuries ago, by a school of Aesthetes, whose lives were spent in the punctilious observance of the rules prescribed for tea-drinking and incense-burning and the writing of sonnets, in grounds laid out upon principles, of which the slightest violation would be an outrage upon the decencies of culture. In such gardens flowers play but a small part, but the shapes, the position and the orientation of quaint rocks, the introduction of miniature lakes, and even of the similitude of rivers carried out in sand or gravel, with stepping stones by which they may be crossed without disturbing the smooth surface, these and many other whims are the important but sober and yet fantastic features upon which the Japanese landscape gardener insists.

Trees and flowering shrubs—such as cherries and plums—lianes like the Wistaria and the ornamental vines, are used with the utmost discretion, as they are with us. But the introduction of alien plants, the exhibition of bronze ornaments and lanterns, or the naturalistic arrangement of rock-work with a streamlet crossed by lacquered bridges, no more give a garden the claim to be called Japanese than the possession of a piece of old Greek sculpture would liken a house to the Acropolis of Athens, or than skill in the pretty and very difficult game of kicking shuttlecocks with the heel would

entitle a Pekinese boy to claim kinship with a Rugby football player.

A Japanese garden has a certain poetry and secret charm of its own. To those who are adepts in its mysteries it is full of suggestion, but it is highly artificial; everything that you see in it is a contradiction of Nature, who, poor dear! is forced into obeying every craze and vagary of the artist, not being allowed to see a twig or a bud take the direction which she destined for it. In that it lacks the sweet simplicity and countrified untutored grace of our English Edens. It is not a place in which a young maiden would gather a posy jewelled with May dew, or stoop to consult the ray-florets of a daisy as to the beating of her lover's heart.

There are many crafts in which we English folk have much to learn from abroad; in gardening that is not so—there we are not unskilled, indeed rather copied than copiers. We have our own gardens and we may rest content with them, since they give us without stint the full joys of form and colour, beauty and fragrance. What more do we want? The gardens of the Japanese may suit the fairies of their own legends, but the great god Pan would surely rather see his Dryads and Wood-nymphs tread a measure on the velvet of a trim English lawn, than picking their way among cruel stones to the torture of their rosy feet.

But though we may not be minded to imitate

in our own homes the eccentricities and fancies of Japanese garden experts—whims and fancies handicapped by the severities of austere tradition—there is no law to hinder us from taking a hint from some of the effects which they achieve, nor from introducing into our gardens some great masterpiece of one of those exquisitely imaginative artists whose smaller and daintier works are gems welcomed with such warmth elsewhere.

Some months after the above lines were written there appeared in the *Times* of May 6th, 1916, one of those charming articles on gardening with which we are from time to time favoured, in which the writer expresses much the same view of the Japanese gardener's art that I hold. Only in one point I differ from him. It is not "a close study of nature" which guides the Japanese landscape maker; on the contrary, he follows whims and symbols hard to be understood. Every distorted stone which he brings at great expense from a huge distance must be so placed as to be in harmony with some cryptic principle of æstheticism. Nature is not what he aims at.

The Japanese, who have an exquisite system of their own of natural gardening, though of gardening in which all is designed and nothing left to chance, are very sparing of flowers. They would rather have one blossom where it will tell as a delightful surprise than a thousand where they merely make a mass of colour. Placing is everything to

them, but their principles of placing and grouping are got from the close study of nature, like an artist's principles of composition. We must not imitate them, for if we do, we shall merely parody them. Bamboos and stones and lanterns will not make a Japanese garden.

But we can grasp the principles on which they express their love of nature in a garden; we can see clearly what is the difference between formal and natural gardening, and avoid the mistake of trying to combine the beauties of both. One is always uncomfortable in a garden when there are a thousand flowers where a hundred would be better. One may not be aware of the waste, but it wearies one all the same.

The fascination of the East never dies. But there comes a fatal time when, to the voice of the Siren, sing she never so tenderly, there is no response. Age and new duties have forged fetters, sweet and soft as rose-leaves, but so binding that not even the loadstone mountain of Sindbad the Sailor would avail to tear them away from us, and so we are fain to satisfy our travel-hunger as best we may, feeding upon memory. Then it is that the relics gathered together during the adventures of many years acquire a new and almost sacred value. They speed the flight of our thoughts like the wings of Pegasus. The man who has chafed with the Jew merchants in the picturesque gloom of the bazaars of Stamboul; who has bathed

in Jordan and Scamander, and slept in the black tents of the Bedouin; who has wandered through the mysterious portals of the Chïen Mên, the frowning gate of the Tartar city, to sip tea with some art expert in the Liu Li Châng, the Pater-noster Row of Peking, listening to stories of the dilettanti in the reign of Chïen Lung the magnificent—such a man, if now he can do no more than trim the silken sails of his imagination, bound for the lands of enchantment, must have about him many a treasure which, if he but shut his eyes and give himself up to the luxury of dreaming day-dreams, will bring back to the old wanderer a whiff from the birthplace of the Sun, a whiff sweeter in his nostrils than those cloying perfumes to which the æsthetes, according to their affected euphuist jargon, “listened” centuries ago in the lovely gardens of Ginkakuji, the Silver Pavilion of the sacred city of Kioto.*

As for me, I have been all my life bitten by the collector's mania, and so the wings of my Pegasus have many feathers; for my house, and even my gardens, are full of curious odds and ends, the spoil of many lands. On the terrace standing sentry at the entrance to the house are two huge bronze Kylins (in Pekingese, Chih Ling), representations of the mystic beast which was seen last at the birth of Confucius, and will not reappear until ten thousand years shall have elapsed from that date.

* See my “Garter Mission to Japan,” pp. 193-203.

The male has a single horn and is very fierce, but not more so than his hornless mate, which, with her cruel tusks, grins defiance at the world. Just such another pair in the Imperial Park of the Ten Thousand Longevities at Yuen Ming Yuen used to raise my wonder fifty years ago. Built into the wall of one of the two little gazebos which are at the east and west ends of my terrace are two bricks—the one rough and rugged, sun-dried and splashed with the mortar of more than two thousand years since, from the Great Wall of China at Ku Pei Kôu; the other white, smooth and richly glazed from the famous Porcelain Tower of Nanking, which was destroyed by the Tai Ping rebels some sixty years ago, before they were overtaken by the Vengeance of Gordon and “the Ever-Victorious Army.”

Shall I ever forget the tramp of a couple of miles under an August sun in 1865 with that huge brick from the Great Wall seeming to bite into my aching shoulder? Over against the little summer-house, guarding the entrance to the garden from the attacks of evil spirits, are small statues of the Ni-o, the two kings whose ugliness is enough to scare away any inauspicious demons who might be about. They must miss the ritual of their own country where the pious pilgrim, having written his prayer on to a scrap of paper, chews it into a pellet, and spits it at the sacred figure. If it sticks, all is well, and the prayer will be heard;

if it falls to earth, the fates will be unkind—so outside a fashionable temple the two gods are bespattered all over with an eruption of moist pellets. Here from that holy rite they are immune.

High up in the wildest part of the wild garden, under the shade of a spreading oak, there stands, or rather sits, turned towards the East, as is fitting, a bronze statue of Buddha of heroic size. His hand is raised in the attitude of preaching; his features are expressive of the holy calm and noble abstraction which are traditional in the effigies of the great reformer; the centre of the skull is slightly raised, and between the brows is a curl, representing the wind, the mystic white lock. These two are among the many secret birth-signs by which the soothsayers and diviners recognize in a newly-born babe the advent of a Boohisatva, or future Buddha. Surrounding the figure are planted chusan palms from China and bamboos from the Himalaya mountains, among which a stag and a hind, life-sized bronze representations of the small Japanese deer, watch over the loneliness of the thinker. Facing the statue is a rest-house, flanked by two huge bronze lanterns bearing the chrysanthemum and the Pawlonia flower, the two crests of the Mikado, and on either side of the door are two small white granite elephants, brought from Ceylon, Buddhist symbols, full of significance. A little higher up the hill a pergola leads to a tiny spring, with a dol-

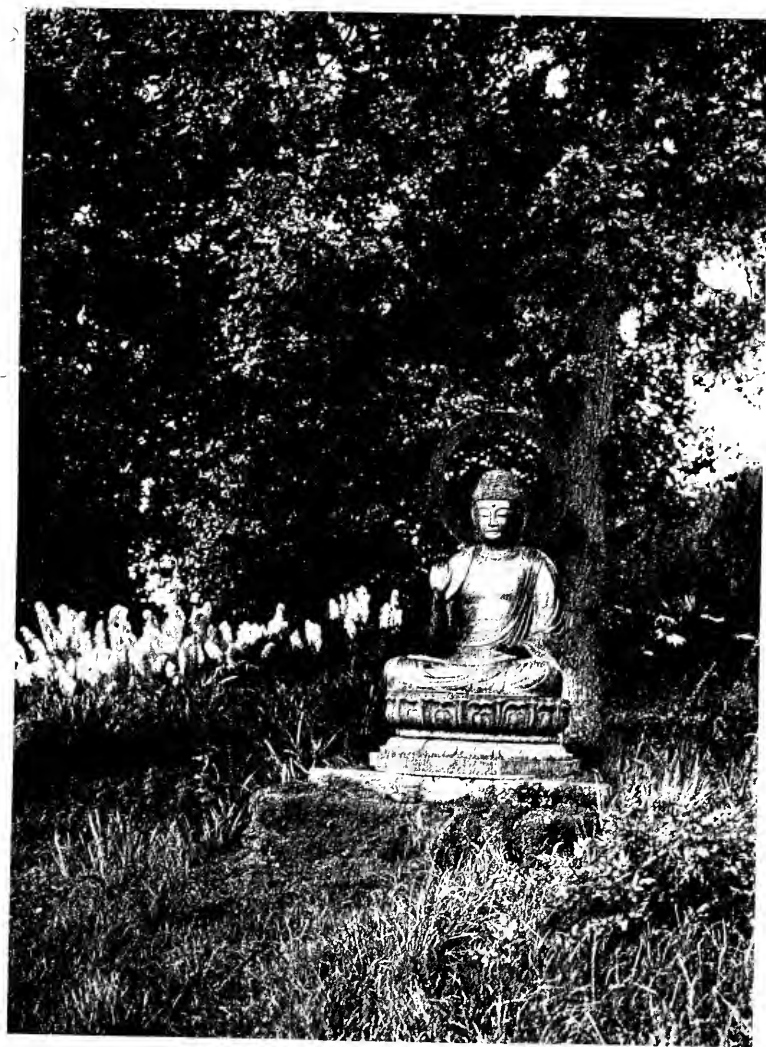


FIGURE OF BUDDHA IN THE AUTHOR'S GARDEN

phin spout, from which fitfully, for it is often dry, a runlet of pure water trickles into a stone basin.

Immediately opposite is an ishi-dori, one of those granite lanterns which you have seen in every Japanese temple. Lower down the hill is a grand bronze lion, with his paws resting upon a ball of cloisonné enamel, symbolical of the strength of Buddha, and in the middle of the walled garden is a dragon fountain, spouting water into a tiny pond full of pink water-lilies and gold-fish. We Westerns are wont to talk of fiery dragons; not so the Orientals. With them the dragon is a creature of the water, and so is used in art for fountains just as we use the lion's head, taking the idea from the Egyptian, who imagined that the rising of the Nile took place when the Sun was in Leo. In China the dragon represents the principle of good, the tiger that of evil; the thunderstorm is a fight between the two.

All these things have their meaning, and here, as you sit in the broad verandah of the rest-house, represent two scenes in the life of the Buddha; firstly, the preaching of the first sermon in the Migha-déva, the deer forest near Benares, where the stags and hinds come to listen to the Holy One, and, secondly, the Veluvana, or Bamboo grove, which King Bimbisara presented to the Buddha and which became the first Vihara, monastery or meeting-place, of the new sect's adherents and

monks. The story of the Veluvana is that of Ahab and Naboth the Jezreelite over again. Some six hundred years more or less before our era—how much more or how much less is a matter of small moment, though the learned must needs break their heads in the vain attempt to fix the exact dates of these events—there reigned in Maghada King Bimbisara, a monarch not a little feared.

Before he mounted the throne he greatly had set his heart upon a certain grove, or garden belonging to a householder who would not part with it. So he determined to bide his time until he should become king, and then to kill the man and take his land. This he did, and the lawful owner, who after death was born again in the shape of a poisonous snake, sought an occasion to fix his deadly fangs in the king. One day the king had gone into the garden with his wives, and fell asleep while only one of the women was by him. Then the snake, crawling close to him, was about to strike, when some Kalantaka birds seized it and began to scream. This woke the woman, who jumped up and killed the snake.

In gratitude to the birds who had saved his life, the king caused the garden to be planted with bamboos, which they love, and the place became known as the Kalantakanivasa Veluvana, or the Bamboo grove of the Kalantaka birds. Barthélemy St. Hilaire, following the story of the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan Chivang (of whom I hope to speak later),

gives a less romantic derivation to the name Kalantakanivasa. Kalanta, as he tells the tale, was a rich merchant, who had originally given his garden to the Brahmans, but having received the sublime Law, he took it away from them and transferred it to the Buddha. I hope that this may not be the true story, for in that case the name would simply mean the Bamboo grove, or garden of Kalanta, and so the birds and the snake must fade into the clouds of fancy.

According to the more legendary version of the story, it is written that when the Blessed One, having attained the supreme wisdom, entered upon his ministry, after six years of meditation, and an asceticism which had almost starved his very life, he came with his disciples to Rajagriha, where he was visited by Bimbisara, King of Maghada. This king had had five wishes: (1) That a Buddha might appear during his reign; (2) that he might himself see him; (3) that he might learn the truth from him; (4) that he might understand it; (5) that he might follow his commandments. When the king saw the Buddha and listened to his preaching, he was converted with many of his people, and invited the Blessed One to come to his city, where he set a great feast before him. When the feast was over, the king solemnly poured water over the hands of the Blessed One, saying, "I give the Kalantakanivasa Veluvana to the Blessed One to dispose of as may please him." And that is how it came to pass

that a grove of bamboos was the first Vihara, or meeting-place of Buddha and his saints.

Full of poetry and Indian mysticism are the legends and fairy tales which monkish superstition has woven round the life of the Buddha, doing him and his memory no good service thereby; for when truth is overgrown with fables, like some fair flower choked by weeds, it becomes lost to sight and strangled, and men begin to doubt whether, indeed, it had any existence. In this way some doctors have been led to deny that such a man as the Buddha ever lived upon earth; men of learning have spent much profound scholarship on proving that he was merely a sun-myth; others have explained him away as being in some sort an astronomical allegory. It would be as easy to explain away Napoleon Buonaparte—indeed, did not that cunning logician, Archbishop Whately, making fun out of his own science, prove irrefutably by rule of syllogism that no such man as Napoleon ever did or ever could have existed?

That Buddha was a very real man, inspired by the highest ideals, is a fact which all advance in knowledge proves more and more conclusively. Facts cannot be swept away like cobwebs; indeed, cobwebs are facts, as every housewife knows, and though a besom may annihilate them, their rebirth remains a demonstrable truth. So it is with the Buddha. The travels of Fa Hsien and Hsüan Chwang, Chinese pilgrims, who in the fifth and sev-

enth centuries of our era went to India to collect Buddhist books and study the dogmas and history of the religion, have been recorded with all the scrupulous care and minuteness peculiar to their nation, and show the veneration in which the sites and monuments sacred to the Buddhist story were still held in their day. Nor is that all.

Within the last twenty years, under the authority of the Indian Government, researches have been carried on by a learned Babu named Chandra Mukherji, under the direction of Mr. Vincent A. Smith, and those researches, which are of the highest interest, corroborate the statements of the two Chinese monks, in whose accounts the differences are no more than what would be expected in the work of men separated by an interval of two hundred years.

If we must remember that Prince Siddartha claimed no divinity—nor even divine inspiration or revelation—then stripped of the husk of fable and vain tales with which monkish folly has overlaid and obscured it, there is no more touching story in man's record than that of the great renunciation with which Buddha entered upon the work to which he felt himself called. Brought up in the soul-stealing languor of an Oriental court, he left everything in order to face the hardships of a solitude and asceticism in which he was to find that peace which the world could not give to him, but which,

if only he could attain the supreme wisdom, he might give to the world.

Prince Siddartha, the Buddha that was to be, was the son of Suddhodana, King of Kapilavastu in the Tarai of Nepal, under the shadow of the giant Himalaya mountains. Suddhodana was the chief of the Shakya, a proud clan, descended from the solar race of the Gautama. It puzzles the un-instructed reader to find the Buddha often referred to as Shakya Muni, or Gautama Buddha. The first of these titles means the hermit or recluse of the Shakya clan, and Barthélemy St. Hilaire connects the word *muni* with the Greek *μόνος*, the French *moine*, etc. Gautama Buddha simply means the Buddha of the Gautama race, in contradistinction to the many Buddhas that preceded him during the countless æons in which the Indians believe, and to those Buddhas that are yet to be, the next of whom is the Maitrya Buddha, the Buddha of brotherly love, for whom we have to wait many thousand years, and who is often represented as lying down and laughing—a favourite subject with Chinese sculptors and artists. The Queen of King Suddhodana was the daughter of King Suprabuddha, a neighbouring monarch, a princess of such surpassing loveliness, wisdom and virtue, that she was called Maya the Illusion, for men could not believe that so wondrous a being could be aught but a dream, a vision, an unreal phantasy.

One night Queen Maya dreamt a dream: in her

sleep it seemed to her that a white elephant with six golden tusks entered her side. She dreamt, moreover, that she was moving in heavenly space, that she ascended a great rocky mountain, and that a vast multitude bowed down before her. When the soothsayers came to interpret her dream, they declared that they meant that she would bring forth a son who should be marked with the thirty-two signs which indicate a great man. Either he would remain in his kingdom and become conqueror and monarch of the universe, or he would forsake home and the world and receive the full light of wisdom as a perfect Buddha. Now, when the time of her delivery came near to being fulfilled, Maya betook herself to her father's city, and went to the garden which he had dedicated to his Queen Lumbini, and as she stood leaning against a certain tree the pains of travail came upon her—for the mother of a Buddha must bring forth her child standing. Then the great god Indra raised a mighty tempest, and scaring away all Maya's women, took upon himself the disguise of an old midwife, and prepared to receive the babe in his arms; but the child, pushing the god aside, would have none of him, but by himself took seven steps towards each of the four cardinal points of heaven.

To the East he said: "I will reach the highest Nirvana."

To the South: "I will be the first of all creatures."

To the West: "This will be my last birth."

To the North: "I will cross the ocean of Existence."

Many signs and wonders followed. A heavenly choir of gods and Yakshas appeared in the sky, hovering over the birthplace and singing hymns of gladness to celebrate the birth of a Bodhisatva, who after years of devotion should one day become Buddha and attain supreme wisdom. Two dragons came out of the clouds, the one spouting warm water, the other cold, and so the god-like babe was washed. Moreover, it came to pass that when the appointed time for the child to be taken, as was the custom among Shakyas, to do homage at the shrine of Shakya Vardana, the statue, instead of receiving obeisance, bowed down in worship at the babe's feet.

Then the king knew what manner of son this was, and he perceived that the soothsayers had spoken truth. Of the two alternative futures which they had foretold for him, the king would have preferred that he should become the monarch of the whole world. But the gods knew better. They knew that he was to be not the monarch of the world, but its freer: the sacrifice and renunciation of his life were to strike off from millions the shackles of sin and misery. They knew, moreover, that all the king's endeavours to turn the Blessed One from his purpose would be vain; yet must the king needs try, and so throughout the prince's youth

every temptation that riches and luxury and pleasure could offer was put in his way. In the life of the Buddha it is easy to separate the wheat from the chaff, the facts from the fairy-tales. The great central truth remains untarnished in spite of all, and so in telling the story we, seeking to show the inspiration of Oriental mysticism, need hardly rob it of the mystic glamour of that poetical embroidery in which the rich imagination of Indian priests has enwrapped it.

Seven days after the birth of her son the beautiful Queen Maya died, and the babe was given over to the care of her younger sister, Prajapati Gautami, who was also one of King Suddhodana's wives.

It is strange that in his picturesque Buddhist poem, "The Light of Asia," Sir Edwin Arnold should have omitted many of the legends with which he must have been familiar, and which would well have fitted the rather sensuous character of his verse. Moreover, he mixes up the stories of the two wives of Prince Siddhartha, Yasodhara and Gopa, and altogether omits any mention of the birth in the Lumbini Garden. Now the Lumbini Garden is one of those places connected with the Buddhist records which have been identified with the utmost certainty. The early Chinese pilgrims were shown the spot, and were careful with accuracy to describe the monuments which now, after all these centuries, the Babu Chandra

Mukherji has been able to verify. On the spot where stood the sacred tree under which, grasping one of its boughs, Maya the Queen gave birth to her son, contemporary piety, or perhaps at latest that of King Asoka, who lived two hundred years afterwards, erected a chapel in which stood a sculpture portraying the nativity.

The ruins of the sacred building may yet be seen, and, much damaged, the stone image which it enshrined—a barbaric but expressive group. Hard by there still runs the little stream which Hsüan Chwang tells us was called the “river of oil,” a name which it still bears. Twenty or twenty-five paces from the sacred tree is the tank in which Maya bathed, still full of pure water.

In the days of the Chinese pilgrims there was a great stone pillar which had been erected by King Asoka; but it had been struck by lightning, and lay on the ground when they saw it, split in the middle. The pillar with a perfectly preserved inscription by King Asoka stands close to the temple. But the most striking proof of all is in the name Lumbini, or Lummini, which is preserved to this day as Rummin Dei, the initial R of Sanscrit being changed into L in the Magadhi language of the inscription.

So he who visits the Rummin Dei to-day knows of a certainty that he is standing on the very spot where some twenty-five centuries ago Prince Siddhartha was born—he who was to found a religion

which, above all others, has, so far as numbers go, dominated mankind. For his disciples have, indeed, been "as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is upon the seashore."

The years went on and the child grew in grace and beauty of mind and body. His teachers were amazed at the precocity of his knowledge and wisdom. Learning seemed to come to him by instinct, until at last one of his masters said to him: "It is thou that art the Guru, not I." His stature and strength were phenomenal, qualities upon which tradition was not slack in embroidering. Was he not sixteen, some say eighteen, feet tall, and did he not toss a dead elephant over a moat with as great ease as an ordinary strong man would fling a cat across a ditch?

But with all this he was a child of moods. At an age when other children are careless of aught save their toys and their games, he would lose himself in the solitude of the forests and remain wrapped in thought, deep in meditation. The king, his father, who watched him narrowly, perceived this, and felt that it boded no good for his own dynastic ambition. He thought of the prophecy of the soothsayers, and had a premonition that his son's greatness would be spiritual rather than temporal. He foresaw that, however much he might try to turn the boy's thoughts towards the world, his labour would be but vain.

Still, he would leave no stone unturned to win

him over by the perfumed softness of Oriental luxury to the pomp and pride of his rank. Three palaces did he build for him, one for each of the three seasons of the year—spring, summer and winter—and the plenishing of these was such as would appeal to every æsthetic sense. The sweetest singers, the daintiest dancers, were enlisted to brighten the life of the palaces. But against all the spells of the enchantresses the young prince, already almost a recluse, was as hard as adamant.

Soon the time came when it was fitting that he should take a wife, and upon this the king and his councillors based their last hope of turning his mind to earthly things. We are told that the prince thought long and anxiously before he could assure himself that marriage would not engross him to such an extent as to rob him of the calm which was needful for the contemplation and the search for wisdom, to which he was minded to dedicate his life.

In the end he consented, but he stipulated that the wife chosen for him should be no ordinary woman, but such a one as might be a spiritual help-mate to him. Caste was not to weigh in the scale. She might be a Kshatriya, a Vaisiya (householder), or even a Sudra (serf). That was of no account. The mind alone, or perhaps rather what we should call the soul, must be the test. It is difficult to imagine the consternation which, if it be true, as it probably is, such a declaration on the part of a

royal prince would arouse among the bigoted Brahmans of his father's court.

There was, however, no need to fear a degrading marriage, for when the maidens of the noble Shakya clan were brought together, Yasodhara was chosen for her beauty and her sweet nature. And greatly blessed the prince was in his choice, for she believed in him as Kadijah did in Mohammed during the humble days of his life as camel driver, and when after his long self-banishment in the wilderness, he at last entered upon his ministration as Buddha, she with her young son Rahula, followed him as a disciple. But many years were to pass—years fraught with great happenings before that should take place.

It is my misfortune that I have no first-hand knowledge derived from the study in the originals of those books in which the Buddhist legend is enshrouded. I am ignorant of Sanscrit, ignorant of Pali—as ignorant, indeed, as those holy monks and priests who drone out their texts without any spark of light as to the meaning of the words which they recite by rote. But, after all, I am not attempting to write any learned treatise on the religion of Buddha, but simply to give some account as best I may of the legends which satisfy the spiritual cravings of millions of those people among whom I have spent several years of my life—legends which have inspired the art of the Far East just as our own beautiful religion has inspired that of the West, and

which for old sake's sake, I have tried to represent in my own Veluvana.

And so I have to cull from a whole garden of books written by French and English scholars what flowers I can, trying to weld together into some harmony of story their many dissonances. The chief difficulty begins with the tales of the marriage or marriages of Prince Siddartha. Not Sir Edwin Arnold alone is responsible for the tangled skein which we have to unravel. Barthélemy St. Hilaire, Rhys Davids, Rockhill, Beal, and many others, have each of them their own version of the traditional events. With fairy-tales that is inevitable, but the salient facts of truth remain, and these are the same in all the books.

On the day of Prince Siddartha's birth there had appeared a mystic tree, which was called "The Essence of Virtue." When the prince was twenty years old this tree was blown down and dammed the water which supplied Devadeha, which was the city of King Suprabuddha. In vain did the people try to remove it; but Chandaka, the prince's charioteer, drove him out to a certain garden whence he could hear the cries of the people, and he was about to go to their help when a wounded wild goose, the Hansa of Indian myth, fell at his feet.

The prince took it up and tended it and bound up the wound. Now the goose had been shot by his kinsman Devadatta, and this was the beginning of a great enmity between them. For Devadatta

sent a messenger to the prince to demand the bird of him, claiming it as the prize of his bow; but the prince would not yield it up, saying that the bird belonged to him who had saved its life rather than to him who would fain have taken it. From that time forth Devadatta hated him, and appears throughout the whole story of the Buddha's life, and even in what are known as the "Birth Stories" of previous existences, as his bitter enemy.

Then the Prince left the garden, and seizing the tree which had defied all the strength of the people, threw it into the air so that it broke in two, the halves falling on the two different sides of the stream. As, after having performed this feat, he was returning home, he saw a beautiful maiden who was looking out from the terrace in front of her father's house. The prince stopped his chariot and a great love sprang up between the two. The damsel was Gopa, the daughter of Dandapani, a noble of the Shakya clan.

When King Siddhodana heard what had happened, he was overjoyed, and asked the father for the maid as a bride for his son. But Dandapani scorned Siddhartha as a dreamer of dreams. The Kshatriya was like the samurai of Japan, whose sword is his soul, and full of this spirit he declared that it would bring shame upon a warrior were he to give his daughter in marriage to one who cared not a jot for those manly sports and contests which be seemed a Kshatriya, but spent his time in idle

thought and vain imaginings. If he wanted Gopa, let him prove his mettle; let him fight for her and win her against all comers. So a great tourney was held, of which Gopa was to be the prize.

The Prince and his two kinsmen, Ananda, who loved him and afterwards became his disciple, and Devadatta, the betrayer, with all the young braves of the clan, entered the lists. But it mattered little who opposed him; none could hold his own against Prince Siddhartha. Disputing with the most learned Gurus, he was always the conqueror. In manly exercises, horsemanship, wrestling, archery, and many other sports, he defeated all rivals. He alone could bend the mystic bow of the ancient Shakyas, and when he shot an arrow into the air and it fell to earth, from that spot there sprang a jet of healing water, which to this day is shown as the Arrow Fountain. And so Gopa fell a willing prize to the bow and spear of the king's son whom she loved. But Devadatta, beaten at all points, went his way more than ever bearing hatred and jealousy in his heart.

In spite of all the charms and gentle goodness of his wives, in spite of the arts and graces of the singing and dancing girls of his palaces, Prince Siddhartha was haunted by pity for the world's sin and sorrow, which he divined but which he had not yet seen face to face. The king had been very careful that all ugly and disquieting sights should be kept out of his way. But it was all in vain; sooner

or later the revelation must needs come. The four famous drives furnished the certainty. It happened that once, when he was in his chariot with Chandana, his charioteer, on their way to the Lumbini Garden, before coming to the city gate, they met a man bowed, decrepit, toothless, white-haired, tottering feebly with the help of a stick, stumbling at every step. The prince asked Chandana what this meant, and Chandana explained to him the misery of old age. Sadly he turned back, unwilling to go further. Another time they met a leper stricken with foul disease; a third time they were met by wailings and lamentation, men carrying a bier, women weeping and beating their breasts. This was death. Yet once again they drove out, and this time they met a bikshu—a pious mendicant—with his alms-bowl. Poor, indeed, he was and ragged, but in his face was written the calm of holy happiness.

Then Prince Siddartha knew that he had found his calling. "Vanity of vanities," said the Jewish preacher some four hundred years before Buddha's time, "all is vanity." It was in the spirit of King Solomon that the Prince went to his father and prayed to be relieved of all the pomp and burthen of royal state and to be allowed to fly the world in quest of wisdom. But the King would not listen to him, and, on the contrary, caused the gates of Kapilavastu to be closely guarded lest by any chance his son should try to escape.

Let me insert here a wonderful coincidence. At the end of the seventh and beginning of the eighth centuries of our era there lived in the monastery of Marsaba, that wonderful laura in the wilderness of Judæa, a monk of great piety and learning, St. John of Damascus, the greatest ecclesiastical writer of his age, and so eloquent a preacher that, like another John, the famous Patriarch of Constantinople, he was known as Chrysostom, the golden-mouthed, or Chrysorrhoas, gold-flowing. What, it will be asked, has this Syrian monk to do with Prince Siddartha and the four drives? Listen!

Amongst the many books which St. John of Damascus wrote, or is supposed to have written, is the story of Barlaam and Josaphat. St. John said that he received it from travellers coming from India, and so firmly did he believe in its truth, that at the end of the story he appealed to the two saints for their intercession on his behalf.

Max Müller sums up the tale as follows: "A king in India, an enemy and persecutor of the Christians, has an only son. The astrologers have predicted that he will embrace the new doctrine. His father, therefore, tries by all means to keep him ignorant of the miseries of the world, and to create in him a taste for pleasure and enjoyment. A Christian hermit, however, gains access to this prince, and instructs him in the doctrines of the Christian religion. The young prince is not only baptized, but resolves to give up all his earthly riches; and, after

having converted his own father and many of his subjects, he follows his teacher into the desert.”*

But that is not all. In the story of Josaphat, as told by St. John, we have also the tale of the drives—with this distinction: Whereas the Buddhist canon, the *Lalita Vistara*, represents Buddha as seeing on three successive drives, first an old, then a sick, and at last a dying man, St. John makes Josaphat meet two men on his first drive, one maimed, the other blind, and an old man who is nearly dying on the second drive. That is but a slight difference which would be accounted for by oral tradition. The coincidence is striking, and has been pointed out independently by English, French and German scholars; and, as Max Müller says, it is “as clear as daylight” that “*Joannes Damascenus* took the principal character of his religious novel from the *Lalita Vistara*.” The first European scholar to notice this was M. Laboulaye.

And now comes the strangest part of the story. So popular did St. John’s tale become, that it was translated into every European language. Barlaam and Josaphat were canonized both in the Eastern and Western Churches. In the Greek Church the 26th of August is their saints’ day, in the Western church the 27th of November. “If all that is human and personal in the life of St. Josaphat is taken from the *Lalita Vistara*, what follows? It follows . . . that Josaphat is the Buddha of the

* Max Müller, “*Chips from a German Workshop*,” IX., 178.

Buddhist canon. It follows that Buddha has become a saint in the Roman Church; it follows that, though under a different name, the sage of Kapilavastu, the founder of a religion which, whatever we may think of its dogma, is in the purity of its morals nearer to Christianity than any other religion, and which counts even now, after an existence of 2,400 years, 455,000,000 of believers, has received the highest honours that the Christian Church can bestow. And whatever we may think of the sanctity of saints, let those who doubt the right of Buddha to a place among them read the story of his life in the Buddhist canon. If he lived the life that is there described, few saints have a better claim to the title than Buddha; and no one, either in the Greek or Roman Church, need be ashamed of having paid to Buddha's memory the honour that was intended for St. Josaphat, the prince, the hermit, and the saint."*

One night, when the palace was hushed in sleep, the prince roused his faithful charioteer Chandana, and bade him to saddle his horse Kantaka and prepare to follow him. He passed through the many halls where the women, beautiful and graceful by day, were lying asleep in careless and ugly attitudes. It was the reverse of the medal, the repulsive side of luxury, and the sight filled him with loathing. Accompanied by Chandana, he left the palace and entered the slumbering streets of the city. By a

* Max Müller, *ut supra*.

miracle they cheated the watchfulness of the guard at the gate and rode out into the open country. When they had gone some way the prince took off all his jewels and sent Chandana back with injunctions to give them to Prajapati Gautami, who had been a mother to him when her sister Maya died. Then he went on alone into the wilderness. By the way he met a hunter, with whom he exchanged his stately attire for rough countryman's clothes, and in this fashion entered upon the six years of an asceticism such as the world has perhaps never seen. In his loneliness five men came and joined him as his disciples, sharing the hardships of his self-imposed penance.

At the end of those six long years of starvation and wretchedness and mortification of the flesh, when the Blessed One, resisting all the temptations of Mara, the evil spirit, and his three beautiful daughters, had reduced his body to a mere shadow, there came a moment when it was revealed to him that not by asceticism alone could he hope to attain his goal. Not in that way could he destroy the power and misery of sin. He determined to go back to the world, not, indeed, as a warrior-prince, a mighty conqueror, but as a poor and humble teacher, striving to bring help and virtue to his fellowmen. A young village maiden, whose name was Sujata, took pity upon his abject state, and brought him bowls of sweet milk to comfort him and restore his wasted strength. Naturally enough,

legend worked upon this pretty idyll, telling how Sujata milked a thousand cows, and "with their milk fed five hundred cows, with theirs two hundred and fifty, and so on down to eight. Thus aspiring after quantity and sweetness, she did what is called working the milk in." Then she boiled the milk of the eight cows, and, to the accompaniment of many miracles, fed the Buddha with this restoring essence of milk. (Rhys Davids, "Birth Stories," Vol. I., page 91, etc.) But his five friends, angry with him for leaving the ascetic life, turned away from him as a renegade and left him.

So the Blessed One departed out of the wilderness and came to Rajagriha and entered the Mrigadeva, the deer forest, hard by the city. There for seven days and nights he sat in meditation under the Bo tree (*Ficus religiosa*), until at the end of that time he became conscious that he had attained the supreme wisdom and was now Buddha. Under that tree he preached the first sermon, and the five friends who had deserted him were converted and came back. Countless numbers of people from the king of that country, Bimbisara, downwards, flocked to listen to his teaching. Among others came his own wife Yasodhara, bearing him no grudge for having left her, and bringing her young son Rahula. By that name there hangs a tale. When it was told to the Blessed One that a son had been born to him, he answered: "There has been born to me an impediment." This answer was re-

peated to King Suddhodana, and he said, "Let the boy be called Rahula, The Impediment."

When the king heard that his grandson and his mother had gone to follow in the wake of the Buddha, he was sorely grieved. His son had left him. Eight messengers whom he had sent begging him to return had failed in their mission, and themselves remained as disciples with the Blessed One; and now he had but this child to look to for the perpetuation of his name and of his dynasty. Blind—and no wonder, for who can read the future?—he could not see that this son of his would win for himself and for his father a name beside which all the glory and pride of their Heaven-born ancestors would be but a cloud dispelled by the first ray of morning sun. Three influences have ruled the spirits of men since the dawn of the world—Buddha, Mohammed and One other, the greatest of the three. But that other was God.

What would have been the winning of one or more provinces, what the slaughter of a few hundreds or even thousands of bowmen and spearmen, compared with the conquest of the souls of billions of fellow-creatures through the length and breadth of Asia? The old king's name lives, but it lives as that of the father of no warrior, but of a great teacher whose doctrine has given peace and happiness to the souls of men instead of shedding the blood which clogs the footsteps of the earthly conqueror.

We, holding fast the Christian creed, may say with confidence that of all mere *men* who have lived since the creation of the world Buddha was the greatest. Next to him, I should count Confucius, and after Confucius, Mohammed.

Nothing in Buddha's life seems to me greater than the victory which he achieved over himself when he became convinced of the aimlessness of the ascetic life. He had left his palaces, his wife, and all the pomp of his father's court, in order to fly from the world and its temptations and lead a life of privation and meditation. After six years he saw the futility of such a life. His aim was to do something that should redeem the world from sin and its miseries. How could solitude, starvation and mere meditation achieve that?

So, in spite of the indignation of the five men who had followed him into the ascetic life, he determined to go back into the world and live for the good of others instead of sitting wrapped in his own thoughts. He believed that he had achieved the great good, and he realized the fact that his attitude was one of utter selfishness, barren of all result, and leading to nothing. The disappointment and the desertion of his five followers must have been bitter. But comfort came to him in time, for they grew to know that he was right and were converted as trusty disciples to his new creed. From the time that he left the shade of the Bodhi tree his ministration began. He knew that he had received

the sublime gift of wisdom, and that the gift was not for himself alone, but for the purification and happiness of all mankind. It was no doubt a great struggle to give up the illusion of six long years and the dream of many more. But it was also a great triumph, the turning-point of a life that was so full of destiny.

I have already told how the first Vihara was established in the Veluvana, the pious gift of King Bimbisara, but the chief home of the Buddha was another garden or grove called the Jétavana, which a certain minister named Anatha Pindaka had bought at a great price from Jéta, the son of the King of Sravasti. Here the Buddha dwelt for more than twenty years, and there he uttered the Jatakas, or Birth Stories, which have been preserved mainly thanks to his kinsman Ananda. For it is a strange coincidence that, as in Christianity so in Buddhism, there is no written word by the Master. These Jatakas are of the nature of parables by which the Buddha was wont to illustrate the events of the present by stories of what had taken place in a former state of existence; and as the Buddha's life was one long struggle against the treacherous designs of his enemy Devadatta, so in the Jatakas we find a constant reference to the feud as having existed in previous incarnations.

When first the Buddha began to preach, women were not admitted into the Holy Order; but there soon came a moment when they, too, yearned to

listen to the teachings of the master. A certain noble of the Shakya clan took his wife and a number of Shakya ladies to sit at the feet of the Blessed One. Among them it is to be inferred were Gopa and others of the Buddha's wives. But Yasodhara was not among the very first, for she still longed for her lost husband, and hoped against hope that he might yet come back to her. But when she saw that this could not be, she, too, was converted and became a saint, earning the praise of the Blessed One for her modesty and virtue.

Now Devadatta, seeing the great power of the Tathageta (Buddha), had, against his will, for it would deprive him of all chance of sovereignty, become a Bhikshu, and carrying the beggar's bowl, had set up a Vihara in rivalry to that of the Buddha. He, too, must needs convert disciples, both men and women. It chanced that among the latter there was a young married woman, who, though she knew it not, was with child when she joined the sisterhood. When she discovered how matters stood with her, she made no attempt at concealment, but told her superiors of her case. Upon report being made of this to Devadatta, he was wroth, and declared that as she had broken her vows she must be disgraced and banished from the community. In shame and sorrow she came to the Blessed One and laid her case before him.

He was moved with pity, but saw that it would do harm to the Holy Order and give offence to the

weaker brethren and sisters if he were to admit a nun who had been rejected as unchaste by Devadatta, unless she could prove her innocence. So he ordered that an inquiry should be made, and upon the assurance of a wise woman, named Visakha, that the girl's condition was not due to any violation of the rules of the order, but was only the natural result of her marriage before she entered the sisterhood, he accepted her, and when the nun's child was born, he was known as Kassapa the Prince, and was brought up in royal state. The Master justified his action by the story told in the following Jataka, which is given at great length by Rhys Davids.

Long ages ago the Bodhisatva came to life as a deer. When he was born he was of a golden colour, his eyes were like round jewels, his horns were white as silver, his mouth was red as a cluster of Kamala flowers, his hoofs were bright and hard as lacquer-work, his tail as fine as the tail of a Tibetan ox, and his body as large as a foal's. He was known as the Banyan deer, and lived in a forest with an attendant herd of five hundred deer, over which he was king. Near him dwelt another deer, also gold-coloured, with a like herd of deer under him. He was known as the Monkey deer.

Now the King of Benares at that time was a mighty hunter, and made his people neglect their work in order to go and beat for him. So the people took counsel together, and resolved to make an enclosure, driving all the deer into it and giving

them over to the king, so that their work should be no longer hindered. So the two herds were driven into the inclosure, and when the king went there, he saw the two gold-coloured deer and granted them their lives. But he, loving venison, would go sometimes to shoot a deer and at other times sent his cook to kill one. At last, when the deer, terrified and often wounded, were in despair, they went to the Bodhisatva and told him of their piteous case. So he made a bargain with the king of the other herd — the Monkey King — that the two herds should in turn each day by lot send a deer to the place of execution, so that at the least there should be no more wounding.

One day it happened the lot fell upon a hind in the herd of the Monkey deer. But she being great with young, went to the Monkey deer and said: "Lord! I am with young. When I have brought forth my son, we will both take our turn. Order that the turn shall pass me by." But the Monkey deer refused, saying that he could not make her lot fall upon others, and sent her away.

Seeing that there was no help in him, she appealed to the Bodhisatva, and he took pity upon her, and went himself and put his neck upon the block of execution and lay down. When the cook came and saw that the king of the deer whose life had been promised him was there, he went and told the king, who, seeing the Bodhisatva, said: "My friend, the king of the deer! Did I not grant you your

life? Why are you here?" The Bodhisatva answered: "O great king! A hind with young came and told me that the lot had fallen upon her. How could I transfer her miserable lot to another? So I, giving my life for hers, am lying here. Have no suspicion, O mighty king!" Then was the king moved to great compassion, and saying that never, even among men, had he seen so great pity, gave their lives both to him and to the hind. But more than that, after listening to the Bodhisatva, he decreed that no beasts or birds or fish should thenceforth be killed.

After that, the deer, sure of their lives, began to lay waste and eat the crops of the people, so they complained to the king, who bade them begone, for he might give up his kingdom, but not his oath. Then the Banyan deer called together the herds and forbade them to eat the crops; and he sent a message to the husbandmen, telling them that they need put up no fences, but that it would be enough if they tied leaves round the edge of the fields as a sign. But he continued to instruct the deer thus throughout his life, and passed away with his herd according to their deeds. The king also hearkened to the words of the Bodhisatva, and then in due time passed away according to his deeds.

When the Master had finished this story of the Banyan deer he explained its meaning to the assembled disciples.

"He who then ruled the Monkey deer was Deva-

datta, his herd was Devadatta's following, the hind was the Nun, her son was Kassapa the Prince, the king was Ananda, but the royal Banyan deer was myself." Rhys Davids, "Birth Stories," Vol. I., pages 201-210.)

Purged of its wild extravagances, the Lalita Vistara, the story told by Ananda, gives much insight into the purity and sweet reasonableness of the Blessed One's teachings. Shortly before descending upon earth to be born of Queen Maya, he is seated in the Tsushita (Heaven) surrounded by gods and saints, to whom he delivers this last parting message (I am translating from the version of Foucaux, quoted by Barthélemy St. Hilaire):

"Be careful to avoid all immodesty. All the divine and pure pleasures are the fruit of good work. Take heed, then, of your deeds. If you have not laid up for yourselves these previous virtues, you are hurrying to that goal where, far from happiness, we experience misery and suffer every ill. Desire is neither lasting nor consistent; it is even as a dream, a mirage, the lightning, the foam of the sea. Observe the practice of the Law; the man who faithfully observes these holy practices meets with no evil. Loving tradition, morality and charity, be constant in patience and purity. Act in a spirit of mutual loving-kindness, in a spirit of helpfulness. Remember the Buddha, the Law and the congregation of the faithful. All that you see in me of supernatural power, of science, and of

strength is produced by the agency of virtue, which is its cause, and comes from tradition, from morality and from modesty. Do you, too, practise this perfect restraint. It is not by phrases, nor by words, nor by crying that we can attain the doctrine of virtue. Acquire it by deeds; act according to your professions; never cease in making efforts. Not every one who acts is rewarded, but whoso does not act obtains nothing. Beware of pride, of haughtiness, and of arrogance; always gentle, and never straying from the straight path, be diligent in following the road which leads to Nirvana. Bestir yourselves in the search after the Road of Salvation, and with the lamp of wisdom dispel utterly the darkness of ignorance. Rid yourselves of the net of sin which is accompanied by repentance. But what skills it to say more? The Law is full of reason and of purity. When I shall have obtained the supreme intelligence, when the rain of the Law which leads to immortality shall fall, then come back to listen anew to the Law which I shall teach you."

Then were the Gods consumed by sorrow at the loss of the Blessed One; but he comforted them by leaving in his place the Bodhisatva Maitriya, whom he consecrated by giving him his tiara and his diadem. Maitriya, then, will become Buddha (*vide supra*), when the corrupted world shall have lost all memory of the teaching of Shakya Muni.

* * * * *

The Buddha's life upon earth was prolonged far beyond the span which is allotted to most men. He was some thirty years old when he first began to preach, and his ministration lasted fifty-three years. Surely it is not irreverent to apply to him the words of the Hebrew Psalmist: "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." Render "Peace" by "Nirvana," no bad translation, indeed, and you have the Buddha. When at the last he felt that the dark mystery of death was overshadowing him, and that the end was at hand, he bade Ananda go and tell the Mallas of Kusinara that their master would pass away at midnight, and invited them to come to him. There was at that time in Kusinara an old and decrepit man a hundred and twenty years of age, upon whom the people looked as a saint. His name was Subhadra. This venerable man, believing in the greatness of the Blessed One, begged of him the boon of passing away before him; and, this being granted, Subhadra gave up the ghost. But when the assembled Bhikshus, being astonished at this favour, inquired the reason, the Blessed One told two last Birth Stories.

Bhikshus, in days gone by there lived in a valley a deer, the master of a thousand deer; he was prudent, wide-awake and of quick perception. One day a hunter espied him and told the king. So the king assembled his army and surrounded all the deer and their leader. Then the leader thought: "If

I do not protect these deer they will all be destroyed." So looking about the place in which they were penned, he perceived a torrent flowing through the valley; but the stream was so swift that the deer feared lest it should carry them away. But the leader jumped into the water, and finding foothold in the middle, cried to the herd: "Come, jump from the bank on to my back and thence to the other bank; it is the only means of saving your lives; if you do not do this you will surely die!" The herd of deer obeyed, and though their hoofs striking his back cut the skin and tore the flesh, he never flinched. When as it seemed all the deer had crossed the water, he looked back, and saw a calf that had been left behind and could not cross over. Then, torn and bruised and racked with pain, he took the calf on his back, and crossed the stream with it. All the herd had now passed over, but the great stag knew that death was near, and he cried: "May what I have done to preserve the joy of life to these deer and this calf make me cast off sin, and obtain boundless and perfect light; may I become a Buddha, cross over the sea of regeneration to perfection and salvation, and pass beyond all sorrow." . . .

"What think ye, Bhikshus? I am he who was then the leader of the herd. The deer are now the five hundred Mallas and the fawn is Subhadra." (Adapted from Rockhill's "Life of Buddha," page 137 *et seq.*)

One more Jataka he uttered, and that was the last. He warned his weeping disciples not to mourn for him, or to look upon him as lost, for inasmuch as they had his law and his doctrine, he would still be with them. He spoke to them of the four places where pious men would rear monuments in his honour: (1) The Lumbini Garden, where he was born; (2) the place under the Sacred Fig-tree, where he became Buddha; (3) the Mrighadeva, the deer forest, from where the first sermon was preached; (4) the place where he died at Kushinara.

At the last the Blessed One, uncovering his body, said to the Bhikshus: "Brethren, look well at the Tathagata's body, for it is as hard to find a Tathagata as to see a flower on a fig-tree. Bhikshus! never forget it: decay is inherent to all things!" These were the last words of the Tathagata. And so in the fullness of time, calm and holy, he entered Nirvana, that state in which all the desires, all the cares and all the sorrows of life have ceased to be. Is not that the ideal of "Peace, perfect peace?"

* * * * *

There is a Japanese proverb which says: "Meeting is the beginning of parting." Pregnant, indeed, are those six words, for in them are summed up all the sorrows and the one inevitable certainty of life. When the parting with those who are dear to us takes place, how we treasure some trifle which brings to life recollections of the sweet communion of the past! And so it is with those relics of which

I spoke at the beginning of this chapter. When Assheton Smith, the famous sportsman, was told that he must take his ailing wife to the South of France, he, being a wealthy man, answered: "That I cannot do, but I can and will bring the South of France to her." And so there arose that marvellous conservatory, a glass palace, which I remember well, when nearly sixty years ago I used to go and stay with Lord Broughton, Byron's friend, who rented the place. In our humble way we bring home to ourselves the lands endeared to us by the careless gaiety of former days, scenes which are peopled by the ghosts of old friends whom we conjure up, living once more in the sunshine of happy youth. Is not that the chief sanity of the collector's madness?

CHAPTER II

BUDDHA AND ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI AND CASTE —THE ARYANS

THERE are few days in the year, even in mid-winter, or, what is worse still, in March, when I cannot sit out in my Veluvana, a sun-trap snugly sheltered from the north and the biting east. It is my thinking-place, and on this 28th of January, for some mysterious reason, with his image before me, my thoughts have been held entirely by the Buddha himself. Not that I am a Buddhist, or in the remotest degree likely to become one, though we hear of convinced followers of that religion even among Englishmen; but, as those who condescend to read me will have guessed, the story of his life has a great attraction for me, and that none the less because it is the record of one of the greatest rebellions that ever took place. Indeed, there is something weirdly fascinating in the history of all revolution even where we most hate it. What show-place can possess greater interest than the tragic collections of the Musée Carnavalét in what was once Madame de Sévigné's home in Paris? Yet it is made up of relics which make men shudder, especially those few still left



ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PREACHING TO THE BIRDS

By Giotto

who, like myself, long ago knew not a few people who had lived through the days of the Terreur.

I have stood in that house of gruesome memories spellbound by a fascination such as that by which a snake paralyses its victim. In quite another way I am entranced by the upheaval which was the work of the Buddha. There was not the faintest likeness between the two revolutions—indeed, they were diametrically opposites. The one all fury, flame and murder—hatred, the guillotine, and the *noyades* of the Loire. The other, the calm extinction of all passion, all human desire, all ambition; a life spent in holy contemplation and in the wooing of that supreme wisdom which is virtue.

And yet Martin Luther himself, when he passionately scourged the Pope and his Bishop for the sale of indulgences, was not a more zealous rebel than this calm and contemplative Buddha, who, renouncing all honours and titles and worldly possessions for himself, contented, like St. Francis, to don the monk's robe and to carry the beggar's bowl, entered his peaceful protest against the usurpations and pretensions of the crafty Brahmans, who had long since drifted away from the simple and poetically beautiful teaching of the Rig Veda, albeit they acknowledged its authority as *Sruti*—inspiration, looking upon it as their one inspired sacred Book.* In that wonderful collection of hymns and prayers

* Even the famous Laws of Manu were only held to be *Smriti*—tradition.

about which I wish to say a few words later there is no allusion to suttee—the awful institution under which widows are burnt with their dead husbands; none to child-marriages, another cruelty; none to caste. All of these were inventions of the Brahmans, and it was upon the doctrine of caste that they founded their claim to superiority over the kings and princes whom they had gradually supplanted.

So long as the king and priest were one—so long, that is to say, as the king conducted the ceremonies and sacrifices of religion—the authority of the king was unchallenged.* But there came a moment when the kings grew weary of a tedious ritual and delegated their religious duties to substitutes. That was the opportunity of the priestcraft, who, as the intercessors between the people and their gods—a powerful position indeed—were able to claim a rank higher than that of the king himself. Here was the beginning of Caste. When Buddha entered upon his ministry there were four castes: (1) The Brahmans, or priests; (2) the Kshatriya, the warrior and governing class, to which the kings and princes belonged—a class analogous to the Samurai or Bushi of Japan; (3) the Vaisyas—farmers, traders, etc. These three classes, all of Aryan descent, were, and are, “the twiceborn,” whose second birth is symbolized by their being invested with the sacred cord at an age which more or less corre-

* See Max Müller's “Ancient Sanskrit Literature,” pp. 57 and 80.

sponds to that of confirmation with us. (4) The Sudras were the fourth class; they were the lowest of all—despised as the descendants of the Dasyu, the enemies of the bright gods, the aborigines who were defeated by the migration of the white Aryan herdsmen descending upon India from the lofty plains of the Pamirs.

We talk glibly enough of Caste, yet there are not many of us who have any glimmering of light as to its real meaning or origin. The majority of Europeans speak of the word as if it were of Hindu origin, whereas it is simply a Portuguese word signifying race or family. In its present sense, indeed, it is of quite modern birth, for the old Portuguese Barbosa, writing in the sixteenth century, only uses the word *casta* in the sense of family, speaking of men and women *de boa casta*, of good family. When he wished to indicate the mysterious divisions of Indian society, he used the word *leis*, laws, *leis de gentios*, laws of the heathen. (Sir Henry Yule's glossary.) Apart from the word, we are apt to speak of Caste as if it were an institution, respectable at any rate on account of its hoary antiquity. Old it certainly is, yet it was not known to the sacred poets of the Rig Veda.

The word which comes nearest to caste in Sanskrit is "Varna" (colour), and in the early days of the Aryan invasion of India there were only two classes: the white conquerors and the "Dasyu," or enemies, who were black, and, as the conquered

people, looked down upon. What we call caste, then, which was originally a question of skin, had already in the Buddha's time, five centuries before our era, become far more complicated than that. Ethnologically, the division between the white man and the black, the Arya and the Dasyu, the conqueror and the conquered, was as sharp as ever. But whereas the dark man remained as he was—the lowest of the castes—political reasons and the lust of power had subdivided the conquering race into three distinct classes, and, as I have said above, it was upon that subdivision that the Brahmans laid the “precious corner-stone” of their priestly tyranny.

When the glorious young prince, a Kshatriya and the heir to the throne, the incomparable scholar and athlete, the man whom men envied and women loved, cast aside his royal rank and went forth into the wilderness, taking upon himself all the burthens and privations of the poorest and meanest, in order that for them he might work, striving for the good of all mankind without distinction of colour or race, the Brahmans were forced to see in him a hostile champion, armed to attack their stronghold. He went further than this: he denied the divine authority of the Veda, without which the whole structure of Brahmanism crumbles to dust, and so he finally was branded as a heretic.

What cannot fail to excite surprise is the fact that although Buddhism “became the state religion



PROFESSOR MAX MÜLLER

After a photograph by Elliott and Fry, London

of India under Asoka, the Constantine of India, in the middle of the third century B.C.” (Max Müller), and was only declining in the seventh century A. D., caste should not utterly have disappeared. But that was not the case—on the contrary, it has become more and more involved, for there are now not only the three divisions of the twice-born Aryas, and the outcast Sudras, but there are, moreover, the subdivisions to which professions and occupations have given rise; the goldsmith, for example, looking down upon the bootmaker and leather worker, and he, in his turn, refusing to hold communion with some craftsman whose superior he deems himself to be. No wonder caste has been described as “a standing puzzle to governors and the despair of all employers of labour.” Life is, indeed, complicated when the shadow of a man of meaner birth falling upon a boiling pot defiles the food which it contains by an impurity which is almost worse than poison. As in an Oriental household, perhaps even in a European household, it has been said that no matter how low a menial may be, there is always someone a step lower to whom by payment he may assign some of his duties; so below the Sudras there is the Pariah, the outcast, who, as the word implies, should carry a bell to give timely warning of the approaching contamination of his shadow.

Max Müller, in his “Chips from a German Workshop,” quotes a table by Berghaus showing the relative numbers of the people professing the chief re-

ligions into which the world is divided. Nothing can better show the extent of the influence which Buddhism, with an advantage of 500 years and more over Christianity, 1,100, and more, over Mohammedanism, has exercised upon mankind.

Buddhists	31.2
Christians	30.7
Mohammedans	15.7
Brahmanists	13.4
Various heathens	8.7
Jews	0.3

In a note, Max Müller adds that: "As Berghaus does not distinguish the Buddhists in China from the following of Confucius and Lao Tze, the first place on the scale belongs really to Christianity. It is difficult in China to say to what religion a man belongs, as the same person may profess two or three. The Emperor himself, after sacrificing to the ritual of Confucius, visits a Tao-ssü Temple, and afterwards bows before an image of Fo in a Buddhist chapel."

Ex Oriente lux. We see from this table that all the chief religions of the world have their rise, like the sun, in the East.

I have observed with no little astonishment that certain pundits of to-day speak in somewhat offensively patronizing tones of Max Müller, as if he were a thing of the past, all very well in his day, but not up to date, and already superseded. As to

that, whether his theories upon the subject of mythology and comparative religion were sound or not, I am not competent to judge; but I feel that if others have pushed his work a step further than the point at which he left it, we may fairly ask whether, without his great labours, these sages would have attained their own success. There is no finality in science, and a Newton or a Faraday is in no way dethroned if others have built on the foundations which he laid. The world does not stand still, and it is the common fate of the pioneer that some new man should go beyond what he has reached. However that may be, the collating, translating and editing of the sacred books of India, and the editing of the thirty volumes of the sacred books of the East, including Chinese and Arabic works, were a colossal labour—the work of a lifetime, which has been of national and international value. All honour to the workman!

I first met Max Müller sixty years ago at the Deanery at Christ Church, where the evening parties were gatherings of all that was most distinguished in university life. He was then a most attractive personality, brilliant, of course, still young, not very tall, but extremely good-looking, an accomplished musician, the friend of Mendelssohn. His conversation was delightfully illuminating, and he was generous enough not to grudge the enjoyment of it to a humble undergraduate who was only too ready to sit at his feet. It was a regret to me that

I left Oxford to enter the Foreign Office without having had the chance of attending his lectures; but his works on the Science of Language, and especially his "Chips from a German Workshop," written at the behest of the great Bunsen, who persuaded the directors of the old East India Company on public grounds to defray the expense of his edition of the Vedas, have been to me the joy of many years, and still continue to fill many an idle moment, robbing it of its idleness, for who could be idle with Max Müller?

* * * * *

A very charming book is Sabatier's "Life of St. Francis of Assisi" To me one of its chief attractions lies in the strong parallel between the life of the mediæval saint and the Eastern reformer. The points of divergence are no more than would be accounted for by the differences of time, place and surroundings. St. Francis was not a prince of the blood royal like the Buddha, but he was the son of a rich man, one of those merchants and men of mark who travelled through the world, visiting all the important fairs of those days, and received as welcome guests by the great nobles. Indeed, they, too, had a sort of patent of nobility of their own, belonging to a guild of popularity—for in those days when newspapers were not, the rare visits of a man who could bring the latest court gossip from Paris or London, and whose waggons were often laden with golden tribute sent from beyond the sea to the

Pope, were looked forward to with no little pleasure. So Francis, in his gilded youth, became one of the leading youngsters of the town, foremost in all mischief and riotous living, a fighter and a daredevil, ruffling it in all the fantastic coxcombry of weapons and dress which the ingenuity of mediæval tailors and armourers could devise.

Fighting there was in plenty in the Italian cities of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and who so ready to fight as the extravagant young scapegrace, who was as keen to throw away his life as his money? After one of the local raids came imprisonment for a year—then more fighting, followed by illness, fever and repentance; after that solitude, meditation, and the final renunciation of the world, the flesh and the devil, when the manifest likeness to the Buddha first asserted itself.

The long, lonely silences in the *carceri*, the little natural caves on the side of Mount Subasio, when the saint, plunged in profoundest thought, was dreaming dreams of founding an order which was to save mankind, cannot but remind us of the royal prince starving in the wilderness, he, too, dreaming of the rescue of the world from sin. Both founded their orders on principles which involved the giving up of everything to which men hold most firmly. There was to be no property, no house, no home, no family. Rags and beggary were no disgrace—rather the hall-mark of a spiritual nobility. Homeless, their disciples were to wander forth, trusting

in Providence and charity, which should do something towards filling the beggar's bowl. Neither saw at first that these were conditions which sooner or later must break down. Religion needs its luxuries and will have them: a school of absolute effacement of the world was impossible in the West as it had been in the East. To venture any minute sketch of the aims of the two reformers is beyond what I can do here. Both were animated by the most perfect spirit of self-sacrifice with which they vainly endeavoured to inspire their orders, but no founder of religion has yet succeeded in establishing principles from which their so-called disciples have not sooner or later found self-justified means of breaking away.

One prominent feature in the characters of these two saintly men has in it a touch of poetry which it were ill to miss. Both loved animals with a love that was almost holy. The Buddha held the taking of all life to be a sin, and it is impossible to read the Birth Stories, to which I have alluded elsewhere, without feeling that they were inspired by the tenderest sympathy. St. Francis preached to the birds, and when Buddha taught in the Deer Forest near Benares, stags and hinds stood still and listened.

"Birds, my brethren," said St. Francis to the birds that fluttered round him, "it is your duty greatly to praise and love your Creator. He has given you feathers for raiment, wings to fly, and filled all your needs. He has made you the noblest

of His creatures; He allows you to live in the pure air: you have no need to sow or to reap, but He cares for you, protects you and directs you." And the birds stretched their necks, spread their wings, opened their beaks and looked at him as if thanking him, while he walked about amongst them, caressing them with the hem of his robe. Then he gave them his blessing and took leave of them.

When he was preaching at Alviano the swallows made such a noise with their twittering that he could not make himself heard. The gentle saint rebuked them: "It is my turn to speak," he said. "Swallows, little sisters, listen to the Word of God, be silent and hold your peace, until I shall have said my say!" But for all this and much more, how St. Francis praised God for all His creatures and specially for "My Lord the Sun, for of Thee, oh! Most High, he is the symbol,"* we must turn to the pages of Sabatier. To St. Francis, as to the Buddha, all God's creatures and the life which He gave them were sacred.

If there was much that was alike in the two men, there was one point in which they essentially differed. St. Francis was no scholar. He knew a little Latin, which he had learnt from the monks of St. George; that was a necessity for a man in his position, for Latin was a sort of *lingua franca*

* How like a passage in one of Robert Louis Stevenson's prayers written at Vailima: "We thank Thee, Lord, for the glory of the late days and the excellent face of Thy Sun."

in his day, and was the language of sermons and of political discussions. Writing was a difficulty to him; he rarely took a pen in his hand and could do little more than sign his name. The autograph of the Sacro Convento, which is held to be genuine, gives evidence of great awkwardness. For the most part, he dictated, and would sign his letters with a simple T, the symbol of the Holy Cross. The Buddha, on the contrary, like St. Paul among the Pharisees, was a man of learning, deeply versed in the classics of the Brahmans, and well able to hold his own in discussions with the priests upon religion and upon the interpretation of the poems of the Rig Veda.

There is no ancient historical problem of so great interest as that of the Aryas, that mysterious people of whom we talk so much and know so little, as has been pointed out. The movements of the planets, the orbits of comets, have been accurately calculated; Nature is continually being compelled to yield many of her secrets to the patient investigations of science. But of this masterful white race, some of whom, from the high tablelands of Central Asia, swarmed down upon India as conquerors, while others, wandering by the shores of the Caspian Sea, overran Europe to become the progenitors of all that is noblest in mankind, there is no record, no history, and in regard to them even fable is silent. Where there is no writing, not so much as a graven stone, there

can be no Champollion, no Rawlinson. The migrations of the Aryas, which meant so much for the children of men, were long unsuspected, and only in recent times realized. Even so, the few men of learning who gave thought to this crucial human enigma were travellers in a dense and dark forest, until in the Cimmerian gloom comparative philology opened out vistas—none too broad—through which they were enabled to gain glimpses of a civilization and people of whom all trace had been lost in the midst of many decades of centuries. Narrow as they were, they afforded the *πὸ στῶ* from which the investigation of the lost history was set in motion.

Of this modern learning we must acknowledge Max Müller as the foremost prophet. Bopp, Schlegel, Humboldt, Grimm and Burnouf were great men, but Max Müller, like Saul among the Benjamites, “from his shoulders and upward was higher” than any of them, and he it was who introduced the science of language into his country. To one who, like myself, has been a faithful believer in his teaching, it is a matter of unceasing wonder that there should be men of undoubted scientific and literary merit who hold in opposition to him that the Aryas were originally a European race, who in remote times found their way into Central Asia. This bold theory was started about the year 1839 by a famous Belgian geologist and ethnologist, Omalius d’Halloy, and it was taken up

by no less a man than Robert Gordon Latham, by Benfey, Spiegel, Poesche, Penka, Schrader and others. Max Müller appears to attribute the idea to Benfey, a Jew, who was a learned Orientalist and professor of comparative philology at Göttingen. In Vol. IV., page 223, of Max Müller's "Chips from a German Workshop," we read: "We have all accustomed ourselves to look for the cradle of the Aryan languages in Asia, and to imagine these dialects flowing like streams from the centre of Asia to the south, the west and the north. I must confess that Professor Benfey's protest against this theory seems to me very opportune, and his arguments in favour of a more Northern, if not European, origin of the whole Aryan family of speech deserve, at all events, far more attention than they have hitherto received."

In spite of this, Max Müller does not seem to have bestowed that attention upon them, for I can find nothing either in confirmation or contradiction of the theory. He at once goes off at a tangent on the comparative inter-relations of the various Aryan *languages* among themselves, but on the supposed European origin of the Aryan *race* he is silent. I think it just possible that Max Müller may have wished to pay Benfey a compliment without committing himself to an endorsement of his views. Benfey had been strongly recommended to him by Bunsen, his own great friend and

patron, for whom he cherished the most grateful affection.

In a letter, dated from Heidelberg, February 26th, 1855, Bunsen writes: "I wish you would take advantage of my communication to put yourself into correspondence with Benfey. He is well disposed towards you, and has openly spoken of you as the 'apostle of German science in England.' And then he stands infinitely higher than the present learned men of his department." The desire to please Bunsen would account for Max Müller's faint praise of Benfey's theory, but its adoption would have seemed nothing less than the negation of all that he had so long striven to teach. (Cf. "Chips from a German Workshop," Vol. III., page 469.) Of Omalius d'Halloy, Latham and the rest, Max Müller seems to take no heed. At any rate, I do not find them mentioned either in the "Chips" or in the lectures on the Science of Language.

I, for my part, should as soon accept the doctrine, in which I saw the other day that there is still here and there a believer, that the world is a flat surface, justifying the terrors of the sailors of Columbus lest, when they reached the extreme west, they should topple over, ship and all, into space or Hades, by whatever name you choose to call it.

To some men disputation and contradiction are an intellectual necessity—witness the beliefs that Bacon wrote *Romeo and Juliet*, and that Homer

was an unlimited liability company of prehistoric ballad-mongers. According to the ethnological faith in which I have lived for the last sixty years, there existed in times so remote that they go back beyond the birth of chronology a white folk of shepherds and husbandmen who fed their flocks and tilled the soil in the valleys of the Highlands of Central Asia. There they increased and multiplied until the land of their birth could no longer hold them, and their pastures became insufficient for their flocks and herds. Then began their many wanderings. Toughened by a climate in which they had to live under most trying conditions of burning heat and extreme cold, they were a hardy race, having little to fear from the opposition of the weaker tribes who might seek to bar their way.

There is one point in regard to the theory that the Aryas were originally a European race, which, so far as I know, has not been taken into consideration. The Aryas were obviously a superior people. That they proved wherever they went. In every migration they came, conquered and remained. Has there ever been known a case where a superior race—not a handful of men, like the crew of the *Mayflower*, but a whole nation—has migrated, taking all the risks and uncertainties incident to travel and climate, and leaving the inferior race to enjoy the old well-proved home undisturbed?

Yet that is what the Aryas must have done if they left Europe for the terrors and privations of

the Highlands of Asia, remaining to face the hardships of that inhospitable region for long centuries, until its insufficiencies drove them to seek the kinder soil and climate which their forbears had deserted. But whether the Aryas left Europe for Asia and thence again descended upon Europe, or whether they were originally an Asiatic race of dominant nobility, that is a question over which we may leave the doctors to break their learned heads, in the confident assurance that never can they arrive at any certainty. Theory without a backing of facts, without documentary evidence, must remain valueless.

Only one thing in regard to the European migration or migrations is certain, and that is the fact that all the European languages, barring those of the Huns, their cousins the Finns, the Basques and the Turks (if we may call them Europeans, which let us hope will soon no longer be the case), can be traced back to the speech of the old tribe which perhaps three or four thousand years ago flitted south, east and west from the storm-vexed valleys of the Pamirs, conquering and civilizing, driving the aborigines before it like chaff before the wind.

When I was a lad we used to be taught by such pedagogues as were sufficiently advanced to have heard of Sanskrit, that this and that Greek or Latin or other European word was "derived from the Sanskrit." That is all changed, and no teacher would nowadays dare to preach such nonsense. We

know now that Sanskrit, which must have been more or less a dead language in Buddha's time, only known at any rate by the more learned among the priests, was the descendant, like Greek, Latin, Russian, English, the Celtic tongues and others, from a much older language which was spoken by our forefathers in the Highlands of Central Asia. But Sanskrit, albeit not our parent speech, but rather a distant cousin of our own European tongues, dead and buried though it has been for some two thousand years, has been the key by which the learned have unlocked the door of the most secret muni-room of ethnological lore.

It is not possible to realize all that the Buddha achieved in the world unless we have some conception of the religious and social condition of Asia at the time of his great renunciation. That condition was the result of the two great inroads of the Aryas, the one of the south into Persia, the other to the south and east overrunning India. The one was that of the fire-worshippers and Zarathustra (Zoroaster), whose sacred canon was the Zend Avesta; the other that of the Brahmans, whose inspired message was the Rig Veda. From the former are descended the modern Parsees and Guebres, and there is some justification for believing that the separation of these two streams of invasion may have been due to religious dissent; for to the Parsee—the believer in Ahura Mazda (Ormuzd), the one

God, Creator of the Universe—the gods of the Brahmans are an abomination, and no book is to a pious Parsee so much to be abhorred as the Rig Veda. In the Veda the Gods are called Deva. This word in Sanskrit means bright, brightness or light being one of the most general attributes shared by the various manifestations of the Deity, invoked in the Veda as Sun, or Sky, or Fire, or Dawn, or Storm. . . . In the Zend Avesta the same word Deva means evil spirit. Like the Buddha, Zarathustra was a heretic and a dissenter, and his sacred book, the Zend Avesta, was an attempt to replace the worship of the forces of nature by a religion—purer and more spiritual—under one Divine Creator, Ahura Mazda, the wise spirit.

It is much to be regretted that, like our Lord, the Buddha should have left no written word of his own. It would have been interesting to know whether he held the Brahmanic gods in the same contempt as did Zarathustra and his followers. Inasmuch as he denied the inspiration of the Veda, he obviously must have repudiated them, and in his teaching, as it has been recorded, they play no part. But Max Müller certainly underestimates the respect assigned to them in the later Buddhism of the monks when he says: “In Buddhism we find these ancient Devas, Indra and the rest, as merely legendary beings carried about at shows, as servants of Buddha, as goblins or fabulous heroes; but no

longer worshipped or even feared by those with whom the name of Deva had lost every trace of its original meaning."

Now it is impossible to deny that all over the East, wherever there is a Buddhist temple, there the images of the old Devas, grim and repellent, are devoutly worshipped and propitiated by prayer, even by people who have no inkling of their significance. Moreover, it has been for many centuries the policy of Buddhist missionaries to claim the native saints in countries which they seek to convert as reincarnations of the Buddha, and therefore to be worshipped. For instance, in Japan, Hachiman, the indigenous God of War, is adored in Buddhist temples, and there are many such cases, where there is no question of "goblins or fabulous heroes." In modern times the Jesuits adopted the same policy in China, in regard to so-called Worship of Ancestors and of Tien—Heaven; thereby bringing down upon themselves the wrath of the meddling and muddling Dominicans and Franciscans the interference of the Pope, between whom and the Emperor-King Hsi there arose a controversy, in which the former was worsted and the cause of Christianity in China was set back for centuries.

I have spoken of the Aryas as of "a people of whom we know so little," and yet, in truth, the wonder is that we should know so much with the almost mathematical certainty afforded by the

study of language and of the Rig Veda, those beautiful hymns for which the Brahmans claim *Sruti*—divine inspiration—and which are by far the oldest document of the whole Aryan race. That there should exist any writing of the age to which they belong is a physical impossibility; the heat and damp of the Indian climate are swift and ruthless in their work of destruction. Even in the Buddha's time the very language of the Vedas was dead and understood only by the priests. But we know from the journals of the Chinese pilgrim, Hsüen Chwang—as Max Müller points out—with what painful care the hymns were preserved orally by the Brahmans in the seventh century A. D. We have also, as he further points out, the analogy of Hebrew, the MSS. of the Old Testament, none of which is older than the tenth century, but of which the truth is tested by comparison with the Septuagint. We know that “every hymn, every verse, every word and syllable in the Veda were accurately counted by native scholars about five or six hundred years before Christ.” It is supposed that the collection of hymns was finished some eleven or twelve hundred years B. C. But some of the hymns were then ancient, some modern, “so that we cannot well assign a date more recent than 1200 to 1500 before our era for the original composition of those simple hymns which up to the present day are regarded by the Brahmans with the same feelings

with which a Mohammedan regards the Koran, a Jew the Old Testament, a Christian his Gospel.”*

Some of the hymns appear to me to contain passages of almost sublime beauty, though Max Müller says: “The historical importance of the Veda can hardly be exaggerated, but its intrinsic merit, and particularly the beauty or elevation of its sentiments, have by many been rated far too high. Large numbers of the Vedic hymns are childish in the extreme: tedious, low, commonplace.” And then he goes on to show how the Gods are invoked to grant long life, food, large flocks, large families, for which they are to be rewarded with sacrifices, etc. Here I cannot but think that the great professor, for whom I entertain such sincere respect, is a little unfair. Is not the idea of looking to their God as the Giver of all good things common to all primeval peoples?

The Jews, for instance, though they were full of wise words about the vanity of riches, still looked to Jehovah to enable them to “eat the riches of the Gentiles,” and to lead them to “a land of wheat and barley and fig trees and pomegranates: a land of oil olives and honey,” and of mineral wealth. Again Solomon says: “My son, forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments; for length of days, and long life, and peace shall they add to thee.” Prayers for material prosperity to God, under whatsoever name He may be worshipped, are

* “Chips from a German Workshop,” Vol. I., p. 13.

common to all religions, and it is hardly just to brand the hymns of the Veda as "tedious, low, commonplace," because the ancient herdsmen of the Pamirs were no more disinterested in their prayers than the rest of mankind, but addressed their material petitions to God just as King David and King Solomon did.

It was natural enough that these men, abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks and herds by day and by night, under the eternal ice and snow of the heaven-reaching mountains, should worship the light—all that was Deva (light) was to them sacred and symbolical of the Godhead—and so the Deus of the Latins was originally Light, and when we talk of "divine," "divinity," we are looking back to the worship of our ancestors when they prayed to the Sun, the Fire, the Sky, the Dawn, which were the givers of all good things. Sometimes they are invoked under the names of Varuna, Mitra, Indra. "In one hymn Agni (fire) is called the ruler of the universe, the lord of men, the wise king, the father, the brother, the son, the friend of men. . . . In another hymn, Indra is said to be greater than all; the Gods, it is said, do not reach Thee, Indra, nor men; Thou overcomest all creatures in strength. Another God, Soma, is called the King of the World, the King of Heaven and Earth, the Conqueror of all. And what more could human language achieve in trying to express the idea of a divine and supreme power, than what another poet

says of another God, Varuna: 'Thou art Lord of all, of Heaven and earth; thou art the King of all, of those who are Gods and of those who are men?' "

How beautiful is the following litany:

"In the beginning there arose the golden child. He was the one born Lord of all that is. He established the earth and this sky; who is the God to Whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"He who gives life, He who gives strength, Whose command all the bright Gods revere; Whose shadow is immortality; Whose shadow is death; Who is the God to Whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"He who through His power is the one King of the breathing and awakening world; He who governs all, man and beast; who is the God to Whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"He Whose greatness these snowy mountains, Whose greatness the seas proclaim with the distant river; He Whose regions are, as it were, His two arms; who is the God to Whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"He through Whom the sky is bright and the earth firm—He through Whom the heaven was 'stablished, nay, the highest heaven—He who measured out the light in the air; who is the God to Whom we shall offer sacrifice?

"He to Whom heaven and earth, standing firm by His will, look up trembling inwardly—He over

Whom the rising sun shines forth; who is the God to Whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"Wherever the mighty waterclouds went, where they placed the seed and lit the fire, thence arose He who is the sole life of the bright Gods; who is the God to Whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"He who by His might looked even over the waterclouds, the clouds which gave strength and lit the sacrifice, He who alone is God above all Gods; who is the God to Whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

"May He not destroy us—He, the creator of the earth; or He, the righteous, who created the Heaven—He also created the bright and mighty waters; who is the God to Whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

Well might Max Müller, who has unearthed them, redeem his dispraise of the hymns by saying: "Hidden in this rubbish there are precious stones!" Right well do the hymns, or, at any rate, those which he admits to be "precious stones," deserve their title Rig Veda, the knowledge of Praise. Nothing can be finer, more masculine, than a propitiatory hymn to the Maruts, the Storm Gods, of which he gives us a translation: "They make the rocks to tremble, they tear asunder the kings of the forest. Come on, Maruts, like madmen, ye Gods, with your whole tribe." No wonder men, whose lives had to face the terrors of the icy wilderness,

sought the favour of the unruly forces whose rage meant death to them and to their herds and flocks. A hymn to Agni (fire), "the son of strength, the conqueror of horses, the highborn," is less striking, but the zenith of the Vedic poetry is reached, as it seems to me, in a prayer addressed to Ushas, the Dawn. What a picture it suggests of the old herdsman in those frozen solitudes, falling on his knees when the stars grow pale before the first glimmer of light that stretches along the eastern horizon, thankfully to worship the radiant Goddess who puts to flight the dark shadows of the night and its unseen dangers. Listen to his song of praise:

"She shines upon us, like a young wife, rousing every living being to go to his work. When the fire had to be kindled by men, she made the light by striking down darkness.

"She rose up, spreading far and wide, and moving everywhere. She grew in brightness, wearing her brilliant garment. The mother of the cows (the mornings), the leader of the days, she shone gold-coloured, lovely to behold.

"She, the fortunate, who brings the eye of the Gods, who leads the white and lovely steed (of the sun), the Dawn, was seen revealed by her rays, with brilliant treasures, following every one.

"Thou who art a blessing where thou art near, drive far away the unfriendly; make the pasture wide, give us safety! Scatter the enemy, bring

riches! Raise up wealth to the worshipper, thou mighty Dawn.

"Shine for us with thy best rays, thou bright Dawn, thou who lengthenest our life, thou the love of all, who givest us food, who givest us wealth in cows, horses and chariots.

"Thou daughter of the sky, thou high born Dawn, whom the Vasishthas magnify with songs, give us riches high and wide; all ye Gods protect us always with your blessings."*

So the old shepherd prays, and the Goddess, answering to his call, spreads her rosy mantle over the sky, and tinges the snowy peaks and ridges of the ice-bound mountains: the sun rises in his glory, and the peace of a new day is born to the world.

The piety of the old Aryans admits of no doubt. We are told that the consciousness of sin is a prominent feature in their religion. The poet of the Veda searches eagerly for his sin, and finds it not in his will but in his condition, which even in his dreams holds up evil before his eyes, and at last he turns to his God, the God of Grace who enlightens the simple. He believes in the power of the gods to take away from man the heavy burden of his sins. "Varuna is merciful to him who has committed."

One more point should be noticed in any attempt, however slight, to give a sketch of the religion of the Veda. Max Müller tells us that it knows of no idols. This is the more remarkable when we think

* Max Müller's "Chips," Vol. I., pp. 36-37.

of the innumerable idols of savage and revengeful Gods by which Indian, Chinese and Japanese temples are degraded; all the nightmares of later monks who knew nothing of the pure and clean-minded Aryans, whose Gods, as Oldenberg tells us, in contrast to others, were bright and friendly beings without malice, cruelty and deceit.

It has been well said that the highest value of the sacred poems of the Aryans is historic, and that value has been revealed by the comparatively recent study of Sanskrit. That is in the school in which we learn who the Aryans were, what was the manner of their lives, their religion and their thoughts; and we can, in a measure, trace much of what, after many centuries, led to the development of a Hindu school of metaphysics, in comparison with which the much vaunted Pythagoreans and Greek thinkers were as babes and sucklings. The very name Arya tells us that this ancient people was a race of husbandmen and tillers of the soil, the root *ar* from which the word is derived being found again in the Latin *arare*, to plough, *aratrum*, a plough, and in the Greek *ἀροτρον*; and when we talk of our "daughters," it is well that we should remember that our ancestors on the Steppes, many thousand years ago, themselves invented the word "duhitar," the milk-maid, the very word with which we Europeans, in one shape or another, caress our women-children. The hymns and prayers of the Vedas abound in allusions to the herds and flocks of these old farmers,

whose best friends—and therefore the object of their adoration—were the sun, the stars, the rains of heaven; just as their enemies—therefore to be propitiated—were the storms, the snow and the cruel winds: these were—the life-givers and death-givers. The life of the lonely watcher of the Steppes was of its essence one of contemplation, reflection and introspection.

Let me give one pregnant quotation from Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature"; "At the first dawn of traditional history we see these Aryan tribes migrating across the snow of the Himalaya southward toward the Seven Rivers (the Indus, the five rivers of the Punjab and the Sarasvati), and ever since India has been called their home. That before that time they had been living in more northern regions, within the same precincts, with the ancestors of the Greeks, the Italians, Slavonians, Germans, the Celts, is a fact as firmly established as that the Normans of William the Conqueror were the Northmen of Scandinavia. The evidence of language is irrefragable, and it is the only evidence worth listening to with regard to antehistorical periods. It would have been impossible to discover any traces of relationship between the swarthy natives of India and their conquerors, whether Alexander or Clive, but for the testimony borne by language." ("Sanskrit Literature," pp. 12, 13.)

To the learned Jew—a Semite, to the Hungarian,

the Finn, or the Basque, who are Turanian settlers in Europe, the history of the Aryans is an interesting study, linguistic or racial. To us true Europeans, to us true Aryans, it has a far greater significance. It has all the charm of an inquiry into a piece of remote family history— all the glamour of a pedigree, not to be measured by a few puny centuries, but reaching far away into the clouds of incalculable æons.

Talking idly in a garden, we can do no more than touch the mere fringe of a mighty problem, even though it should be suggested by the great silent Buddha. For instance, we have summoned as witness the one word "daughter," when there are so many others that we use a dozen times a day which are equally strong links in the long chain of evidence by which we prove our descent. But no matter—we have started the clue: let who will pick it up. It will reward him.

CHAPTER III

THE COMMUNE

MY Pegasus is not always inclined to take long flights. Sometimes when a lazy fit is upon him he will venture no more than a trip across the Channel, carrying me to Germany, Italy, Switzerland—perhaps landing me no further off than some place in France. But of that beloved country I have so many recollections, some gay, some sad, that I crave to go no further. One such trip is very short but very tragic. Forty-six years have passed since the episode of which I write, but the scenes of those few days are graven so deeply in my mind that no lapse of time can ever efface them. They haunt me like the pathetic thoughts which are aroused by the solitary little pink slipper of the Princesse de Lamballe in the Musée Cluny. Thoughts are such obstinate vagabonds that they must needs choose their own road, and not even the Buddha, in his Veluvana, can drive them eastward unless such be their will.

The final tragedy of 1871 (from a repetition of the horror of which, may Heaven preserve France and ourselves!) is no doubt in these days eclipsed by the brutal outrages upon which *Kultur* is ever

improving. What will forty-five more years do? That mechanical invention and chemical discoveries should come into play is, I suppose, inevitable. The strange thing is that the whole coarse-fibred soul of the German seems to be infected by the very potentialities of all these ghastly new discoveries, which seem to urge them on to new cruelties and new crimes. In 1870 he knew how to spare. Witness Paris. Now it is otherwise. Still, to us who lived in those days what will always be known as the Franco-German war remains as a poignantly painful memory; though the ravages of war and the carnage were terrible, it was the parricidal fury of anarchy and its monads which made men's blood run cold.

The Commune, that hideous catastrophe which reversed the unnatural crime of Saturn—the children murdering and devouring their own parent—ended tragically with the month of May, 1871. One morning I got a note from the Duke of Sutherland, saying that he had received information that the first train would be allowed into Paris the next day, and suggesting that we should go over and see whether we could be of any use. We started the following morning—the Duke, George Crawley, Wright, the Duke's secretary, and myself; but the train was stopped at Creil that afternoon, and we had to stay there rather miserably for the night. The place was swarming with Prussian soldiery, scowling and truculent-looking, clanking their spurs

defiantly all about the station and town. The people returned their evil looks with interest, but it was of no use—they were the masters. *Væ victis!* It is a terrible sight to see a great people trampled on and tortured by the savagery of a victorious army; but when that army is a Prussian army—ask the Belgians.

There was no difficulty the next day; the train started early, and we were in Paris betimes. There were not many cabs at the station, but there was no great competition, so we were soon suited. I got on the box by the driver, as I was curious to hear what he had to say of the siege and the Commune. Strange to say, he, like every Parisian with whom I talked, was far more bitter against the Commune than against the Prussians. After all, men said, the Prussians spared our monuments; the Commune destroyed them. When we arrived arrests were taking place all over the town, and there was still some shooting of men in the streets, though we did not see it. Full of pathetic suggestion were the little heaps of clothes piled up in the squares and at the corners of streets.

There were some uniforms, but mostly they were made up of humble blouses and the civilian caps of what we should call street arabs—the *titis* of old Paris. The owners, as the cabman said, were all rotting in the Fosse Commune; he himself was full of belated valour. "If there had only been ten men like me," he protested, "ten determined stalwarts,

a horror like the Commune would have been impossible." I asked him what he did. "Mon Dieu! Monsieur! Que pouvais-je faire contre tous ces brigands? J'étais tout seul. Je me suis réfugié dans la cave."

The next day a worthy shopkeeper held just the same language. Ten men such as himself could have held the Rue de la Paix and kept the Communards at bay. He tried to persuade his neighbours, but they would not join with him, so, regretfully, he, too, hid in the cellar. It was strange to listen to these bourgeois who had shown such courage and determination and endurance during the siege, when the Prussians were battering them out of existence. They could face the Prussians gallantly; before the Commune they quailed.

The Rue de Rivoli was a piteous sight. The Ministère des Finances was burnt and gutted; the roof had fallen in, the windows were all gaping, and out of one of them there was a bit of charred blind fluttering dismally in the light summer air like the ghost of a flag. The Tuileries were nothing but a pile of charred stones, hardly the skeleton of a palace left; but the Louvre was luckily to all intents and purposes unharmed. It was enough to make a man weep to see the havoc, the ruins, and everywhere the signs of murder and violence. The Communards and pétroleuses had done their work thoroughly.

We dropped the luggage at the hotel, dismissed



GUSTAVE COURBET

From a painting by himself in the Louvre

the cabman, still fully convinced of the potentiality of his own valour, and started forth for a morning stroll on foot.

When we came to the Place Vendôme, the great column, the bronze record of the past glories of the French army, was lying prone on a bed of straw, torn down by the sacrilege of Gustave Courbet, the *Ministre des Beaux-Arts* under the Commune. It had been badly smashed, and some small fragments had been carried away as *souvenirs*, but many of these were, I was told, recovered. As we drew near to look at the cruel misdeed, a *peloton* of soldiers came along with a civilian in their midst, whom they were carrying off to a guard-room hard by. It was Courbet himself, whom I knew well by sight. I was not the only man to recognize him. An elderly gentleman with a little boy of about fourteen years was passing by. When he saw the prisoner he dashed forward, and before the guards could stop him, knocked off Courbet's hat, shouting out: "*Au moins, scélérat, tu te découvriras devant la colonne que tu as faite tomber.*" Courbet, dazed by this fury of explosive patriotism, picked up his hat and said nothing, while the gentleman, well pleased with himself, walked on with his little son, and the guard grinned satisfaction, but took no further notice.

I had often seen Courbet in former days at the *Café Royal*, where he used to go for his midday meal. As he was something of a *sommité*, a celebrity in art as elsewhere for all his rebellious pro-

clivities, the maître d'hôtel used to receive him with the greatest ceremony, bowing to the ground and rubbing his hands: "Bonjour, Monsieur Courbet. Que pourrai-je offrir à Monsieur ce matin. J'ai un Chateaubriand qui est de toute confiance," etc., etc., etc. Courbet would sit down with majestic condescension, like a true anarchist, deigning to be waited upon with all the adulation which was due to him.

Well, it so happened that after the little scene which I have described in the Place Vendôme, we went on to the Café Royal, where we were received with effusive welcome by the maître d'hôtel. Like everybody else, he began talking about the recent tragedies and inveighing against the Commune. I told him of the arrest of Courbet, his old patron, and he at once launched out into the most violent abuse of him. "Oh! Monsieur, ne me parlez pas de ce sale communex! Si jamais il ose remettre les pieds ici c'est à moi qu'il aura affaire!" I asked him why he used the word "communex," I thought the word was *communard*. "Oui, Monsieur," he replied sententiously, "mais on dit *crapule*, *crapuleux*, *commune*, *communex*, c'est plus méritant." Courbet was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, and was condemned, moreover, to pay a very heavy fine for the fall of the column—none too severe a punishment in all the circumstances of the case.

Some time after the expiration of the six months I was again in Paris, and went to the Café

Royal for luncheon. Who should come in a few minutes later but the great Courbet. Up rushed the maître d'hôtel to meet him, and I anticipated a first-rate row. Not a bit of it! To my amazement I heard the old welcome: "Bonjour, Monsieur Courbet! Qu'est-ce-qu'on peut vous offrir ce matin?" etc. The old story, the old refrain, the obsequious bows, the festive rubbing of hands. I could not resist reminding my friend of what he had said a few months before. Ah! he said, that was all so long ago! "D'ailleurs," he added, "il ne faut pas oublier qu'il a été ministre, et on ne sais jamais ce qui peut arriver!"

Old Lady Edward Thynne used to tell a capital story of Courbet, whom she met a few years before 1870 at some artistic gathering in Paris. He had been airing his political views for some minutes, when to draw him out she said: "But then it seems that all this while I have been talking with a real red republican." "Rouge, Madame," was the answer, "dites, plutôt, violet," and then he went off again at score. "But why," she asked, "do you say that you want to pull down the Tuileries?" "Madame, parce que tant que cette sacrée maison durera il y aura toujours des coquins qui voudront venir y demeurer."

Another notable arrest was that of Paschal Grousset, the so-called Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was caught disguised as a woman in the Rue Condorcet, which created a great sensation. Sir

Edward Malet, who as second secretary of the British Embassy, had been obliged to have some dealings with him, told me that he was really a very pleasant little man, who was always civil and obliging to foreigners. "Not a bad little fellow," Malet used to say. I saw him some years later in London, when he was correspondent of I forget which of the French newspapers, and he came to me at the Office of Works to ask for an admission to a volunteer review which the Queen was to hold in Hyde Park. He was so agreeable that I quite understood Malet's verdict on him.

In the evening we went to dine at Voisin's, where I had heard that the members of the Government of the Commune had been dining and breakfasting every day during their short lease of power. Good old Bellanger, the famous *sommelier*, was delighted to see us. I asked after a certain old chambertin—had he any left? "Pour Monsieur il y en aura toujours," was the answer. But I said, "I wonder that your late patrons did not drink it all up!" "Ah! Monsieur, si vous croyez que j'allais donner de ce vin là à ces charapans! Monsieur, lorsque j'ai su qu'ils allaient venir ici je suis descendu dans la cave et j'ai changé toutes les étiquettes. Ils croyaient boire les meilleurs crus—s'ils avaient su ce que je leur servais! Mas j'étais sûr de mon affaire! Est-ce qu'ils s'y connaissaient ces animaux-là? And then he went on grumbling: "Ah! mais non, non! Du chambertin—jamais de la vie!"

Truly there is a comic element in every tragedy,
and a grave-digger in every Hamlet.

* * * * *

Of all the crimes and cruelties which disgraced the Commune, none excited greater horror than the murder of Monseigneur Darboy, the Archbishop of Paris, and the priests who with him and many others were seized as hostages. The flames of the Tuileries and other monuments, the hell-fire orgies of the mob and the pétroleuses drunken with the lust of blood and incendiarism—when the very firemen pumped petrol instead of water on to the burning buildings—were almost forgotten in the execration of that sacrilege. Upwards of sixty hostages, all innocent peaceable men, against no one of whom could any misdeed be alleged, were put to death. They were imprisoned in La Roquette, and on the 24th of May the Archbishop and the Abbé de Guerry, the Curé of the Madeleine, with Monsieur Bonjeau, the president of the Cour de Cassation, and three Jesuit priests (Fathers Ducondray, Al-lard and Clair), after a sham trial, were led into the courtyard of the prison and shot. The Archbishop, who was the second of the victims to suffer, met his death like the hero and Christian martyr that he was. He stepped to the front, and praying to God for the forgiveness of his murderers, gave them his pastoral blessing. Two of the firing party, less hardened than the others, knelt down and asked his pardon. When the butchery was over the ruffians

stripped the Archbishop's honoured body, and that no degradation might be wanting, carted it off to be thrown like the carrion or a malefactor into the Fosse Commune. Even decent burial was to be denied to him.

After the last desperate fight at the cemetery of Père la Chaise, in which men and women fought like tigers and tigresses, neither giving nor asking for quarter, all mad to kill, and kill, and kill, the body was recovered and carried to the archiepiscopal palace, where it lay in state, with those of the other priests. All Paris flocked to do homage to one of God's saints, and take a last look at the beloved old man. Those who could afford it were in deep mourning, but all were weeping from the richest down to the poorest and humblest, as I saw them march past the body. The Archbishop, lying mitred and robed, looked like a waxen image. There was no sign of pain in his face, no trace of the cruel sorrow and long suspense by which his last days must have been racked; on it was written only that divine peace which passeth all understanding.

The hour-glass had been turned and the sands of the Commune had run out. The prison of La Roquette, the scene of so many horrors, was now in the hands of the Versaillais, and the cells of the hostages were more fitly tenanted by the murderers who but a few days before, when to be respectable was a deadly crime, had ruled Paris with a rod of terror. Passing by the prison, after leaving the

Archbishop's palace, we saw that the great gates were open, and a crowd was gathered outside eagerly watching and craning necks to see what was going on within. I asked what the people were waiting for? A batch of prisoners was to be led out to the fortifications to be shot. Next to me was standing a rather pretty young girl of about fifteen or sixteen years, nicely but very simply dressed, evidently the daughter of well-to-do bourgeois parents. In charge of her was a *bonne*, an elderly woman wearing a linen cap, and the typical tartan *fichu* pinned across her breast.

Presently the excitement began. First came three omnibuses, their usual function, as their placards showed, being to take pleasure-seekers to the Jardin des Plantes; they were driven by soldiers, other soldiers or gendarmes sitting on the top and acting as conductors. Inside an evil-looking crew of scowling ruffians, some of them wounded, all dirty, unshaven and truculent-looking—villains who knew that for them even hope was dead. The omnibuses were followed by litters, in which other soldiers were carrying men who had been seriously wounded, some of them terribly mangled.

In one of the litters lay a dark, fierce-looking man, with a shock mass of black hair. His head and face, pale and haggard, with a beard of three or four days' growth, were tied up with blood-stained linen bandages. His eyes were closed, and he seemed hardly conscious, too feeble to move, too

tired to care. He was respectably, even well dressed in a frock coat. Evidently a man in a superior position to that of those who had gone before. As he came, and owing to some obstruction, his bearers paused for a minute, the girl near me gave a piercing shriek, and crying out: "Papa! Ah, Papa, c'est Papa!" fell sobbing into the arms of her nurse. She had come on the chance of one last look, and had, as the bystanders said, been waiting for hours.

The wounded man, hearing the cry and recognizing the dear young voice, opened his eyes, and pulling himself together for a supreme effort, tried limply to wave his hand. His lips moved, and during the short halt tried to utter a few words, but voice would not come to his bidding; he uttered no sound, his eyes closed again, and quickly his bearers turned the corner and he was out of sight. That dumb farewell was the last of him. The final act can have been but a small matter to him, for he was, indeed, little more than a corpse already. The poor child stood there shaking from head to foot and weeping on the bosom of her *bonne*, and the crowd dispersed. It was a harrowing scene, it was a pathetic scene, the pathos of which could hardly be forgotten by any who witnessed it. After nearly half a century I can still see that grim procession of death, and the young girl's shriek of agony rings in my ears.

Those were days of horror. Retribution had

come with no halting foot; shrifts were short, and justice wasted no time over inquiries; it was even said that a good many innocents perished with the guilty. Whether that is true or not is hard to say, but it was an accusation which in the circumstances was sure to be made. An outcry was raised against the four generals of the Republican armies, Vinoy, Ladmisault, Ciskey and Donay, to whom the guardianship of Paris, divided into four parts, was entrusted.

But far more virulent than any of the attacks upon them were the charges that were brought—most unfairly, since they only obeyed orders—against the Marquis de Gallifet and his dragoons. Those charges came from the white-livered party, set on by such Communists as had managed by hook or by crook to escape observation and save their skins. These did not hesitate to accuse Gallifet of wholesale murders of innocent men and women when the executions took place outside the Arc de l'Etoile. From inquiries which I made on the spot and at the time, I believe that he did no more than his duty.

Gallifet was a most determined man, to whom duty was something sacred, bound to be carried out to the letter at any cost. He was, moreover, a born soldier, loving his men as they loved him, and cut to the quick by the deaths of so many comrades. As a cavalry leader, all men recognized his great worth. Brave as the steel of his own sword, utterly

reckless of his life, as he had shown in the disastrous Mexican campaign and in the Great War, his courage was so infectious that his troopers would have followed him had he ordered the charge to be sounded against all the hosts of Satan. War was for him something very real, not to be treated with half measures or milksop compromises. He was a fighter, and he fought in deadly earnest.

We hear much in these days from peacefully minded lawyers of the iniquity of reprisals. It would be a good thing if some of these learned gentlemen would remember the old adage, "Inter arma silent leges;" adding to it the words, "et juris consulti." It is good to see on this 3rd of February, 1916, that there is at least one great leader of thought left in this country who takes a saner and more masculine view of reprisals than that which is held by some bishops and semi-parsonic lawyers. Lord Rosebery's letter to the *Times* of this day is inexorable in its logic and in its justice.

We must protect our women and children. This is an age of cruel inventions, and if our enemies take advantage of them, so must we, unless we would wish to be as the archers of Edward the Third and the Black Prince would be if we sent them into the trenches to-day, forbidden for chivalrous reasons to use aught but their bows against modern artillery and high explosives. If Germany uses poison gas and liquid fire, so must we. If she

drops bombs from airships upon innocent civilians, women, and children, we must follow suit. God forbid that it should be in the spirit of revenge; but what other deterrent is possible? "Vous l'avez voulu, Georges Dandin." It is much that Lord Rosebery has lifted his voice in this sense.

Gallifet did not hesitate to adopt reprisals, and nobody can say that his methods failed. He knew that the crimes with which he had to deal could not be prevented in the future by the sprinklings of rose-water and soft-sawder. Reprisals in the sense of cruelty to prisoners and murders such as that of Nurse Cavell and Captain Fryatt, are, of course, quite another matter.

I could not help taking a great interest in Gallifet's proceedings, because, although I had only had the very slightest acquaintance with him some ten years before, he was the intimate friend of many friends of my own, both English and French. The Prince of Wales, as he then was, had great regard for him, and never failed to send for him when he went to Paris.

It must have been about the year 1859 or 1860 that he, with Madame de Gallifet, the Sagans and the Pourtalès's, came over to London for a week or ten days in the height of the summer season, and I was asked by Madame de Persigny, the French ambassador, to do what I could to make their stay pleasant. The three ladies, with Madame de Metternich as a fourth, were at that time the recognized

queens of Paris society, or at any rate, of that part of it which bowed the knee at the Imperial Court. Madame de Gallifet was very good-looking, and the Princesse de Sagan handsome and distinguished, but neither of them could compare with the Comtesse de Pourtalès, who had all the subtle charm and teasing beauty of which the eighteenth century portrait painters are the celebrants.

Madame de Metternich, who did not come to London with them, was not a pretty woman; indeed, she spoke of herself as "*le singe à la mode*;" but she was witty and very attractive, and so became the high priestess of that religion of which Worth, the famous man-milliner, a former apprentice of Swan and Edgar's, who had raised his temple in the Rue de la Paix, was the Pope, on the hierarchy of fashion. She was perhaps one degree greater than the other three ladies, but above them all was enthroned the Empress Eugénie, a divinity at whose altar all men and women were fain to fall down and worship.

These are strangely frivolous recollections of pretty women and smart dresses and coxcombry of men-milliners that came thrusting themselves into the midst of one of the great tragedies of history. But these are the tricks which memory plays us: the most grotesque ideas surging up in the midst of acute sorrow, the dance of death serving to accentuate the follies of a farce—so unstable are our minds. All this is conjured up by the recollection of Gallifet, before he became a famous cavalry gen-

eral, when he was a brilliant young officer, the spoilt child of a court, the favourite officer of an emperor, popular with men and women, idolized by his soldiers, long before the cruel wounds of the Mexican campaign—when he showed what the man about town was worth when brought face to face with grim war—the last man in Europe of whom I should have thought that one day he would have to experience those emotions which cause the most callous judge's voice to falter when he puts on the black cap.

Later in life, with his closely-cropped white hair and moustache dyed black, he was a picturesque figure in Paris—still a beau sabreur, still a soldier at every point—a name to conjure with had the opportunity presented itself.

CHAPTER IV

TREES AND THEIR LEGENDS

SOLITUDE, surrounded by memories of which I have spoken, and by the fanciful brood of thoughts to which they give birth, has a mystic power of banishing all trammels of time and of place. The plants in the garden begin to take strange forms: the bamboos are drawn up out of their puny Western stature into gracefully-waving plumes of Brobdingnagian growth, such as we see in the Peradeniya Gardens of Ceylon; the oak under which the great Buddha sits, solemnly holding up a warning hand, changes into a holy Bo-tree, its long-stalked, pointed leaves quivering in a gentle breeze, laden with the heavy perfume of the sacred Champak flower; the fleece of clouds sails away into space and the soft English sky hardens into the metallic blue of the glaring East.

All of a sudden a slight chilly gust chases away the whole illusion. Kapilavastu, Rajagriha, the deer forest, the Veluvana, with its crowd of yellow-robed monks carrying their begging bowls, fade away, and we are sobered into the commonplace realities of life on a spur of the Cotswold Hills. It is like the awakening after the intoxication of Has-

hish, or after the short death dealt by laughing gas.

The dream may have been fascinating, but there are glorious compensations in the awakening, for though our peaceful gardens are not so wildly fantastic, not such an orgy of colour, as those of the gorgeous tropics, our woodlands in their grave dignity are matchless: they touch the heart; the others stir the senses.

It was a lovely day in early summer, and the show of the Royal Horticultural Society was in full swing in the gardens of Chelsea Hospital. All the world was there—all the world, and everybody else's wife. A few of us were standing looking at a grand display of orchids, when a charming lady turned round to me and said: "Oh! how delicate, how beautiful and how distinguished they are! Surely the very aristocracy of plant life!" "No," I answered, "they are only the nouveaux riches. It is the old oaks of our parks and forests that are the aristocracy of plants."

Surely there is nothing more proud, nothing more wonderful in nature, than the noble old age of those patriarchs which centuries ago chequered with their quivering shade the glades in which Robin Hood and Little John drew the bow, and holy Friar Tuck made his quarter-staff spin round his head like the sails of a windmill. Indeed, all our indigenous trees are glorious. The beech, the ash, the wych-elm, and even the so-called British elm, which, sooth to say, is only a naturalized alien

that came to us from Italy and has been so long among us, living in trusty alliance with our natives, that we have come to treat him as our own—all these, in company with the oak, truly make up what Wordsworth called “a brotherhood of venerable trees.”

In Britain, and probably all over Europe, there is no tree which commands so much veneration as the oak. We talk of hearts of oak, and of the wooden walls of old England, and we endow our hoary, gnarled giants with all the attributes of stateliness and royal honour. One squire of high degree I once knew who, shortly before his death, thanking God for a long life, boasted, not that his eighty years had been spent in the practice of piety and virtue, as doubtless was the case, but that he had never cut down an oak. With the oaks we connect the stories of old British kings and the mysterious liturgies of the golden-sickled Druids, those Brahmans of the Cassiterides—the Tin Islands—who, if we may believe Cæsar and Pliny, who are our only authorities—for the priesthood, even if they could do so, might write down nothing—exercised power greater than those of popes. Woe to him who denied their authority or questioned their law! For their excommunication was more terrible than that of Rome, making a man an outcast, a pariah, a social leper, with whom no man might deal or hold intercourse; for if he did, he, too, would fall under the awful ban. After a lapse of

two thousand years we have heard of something of the same kind in our sister island.

And our beloved Scotch fir! What of that true Briton? Happily there are still here and there in remote Highland glens a few of the old primeval forests of that great tree left. Probably the most picturesque of these is the King's forest of Balloch-bine, where you may see it in all the fullness of its nature—veterans borne down with age, stalwarts in full vigour, youngsters in their nonage, babies just born from the seed. Their red stems, glowing in the evening sun, spring out of a carpet of heather, blaeberrries and ferns, among mossy rocks and lichen-starred stones. Close to them are their graceful consorts, the birches, which Lowell called "the most shy and ladylike of trees," drooping their delicate plumes over the pools and musical rills of brown peat-stained burns. What a succession of pictures, hard to beat, does this old forest of Balloch-bine give! And that is as it should be, for is it not the King's own?

The happy union between the pine and the birch has been sung by some Scottish poet in a simple but touching Epithalamium:

"The Pine's the King of Scottish glens:
The Queen, ah! who is she?
The fairest tree the forest kens.
The bonnie birken tree!"

We may be asked, since we have so grand a pine of our own, why import from abroad so many

aliens, many of which are certainly not its superiors in beauty? I suppose that the answer must be that of the daily partridge which the domestically faithless French king brought in argument against the remonstrances of his father-confessor. Besides, it can hardly be denied that many of them are exquisitely beautiful. One of the lovely blue spruces from Pike's Peak in Colorado, looking as if it had been dyed in the mystic waters of the Grotto Azburra of Capri,* strikes an altogether new note in our garden landscape; the steeple of a tapering cypress will give that perpendicular line which is so valuable to a painter, as we may see in Italian gardens, in the picturesque cemeteries of Constantinople, and all over the Levant. A blue cedar from the Atlas range in North Africa, its branches feathered down to the ground in graceful profusion, catches the slanting rays of the sun and sends them back to you as if its leaves were sprinkled with hoar-frost or wrought in some luminous metal. But it is idle to compile lists and catalogues. They make dull writing and duller reading. Suffice it to say that the intrinsic beauties of the many trees, shrubs, lianes and vines, which have been added to our own lovely flora, furnish an ample justification for their admission into our homes.

But apart from this there is the collector's mania to be reckoned with. Most men take a pride in showing their friends some gem, some treasured

* *Picea pungens glauca*.

rarity, and the gardener is as proud of his collection of unique plants as the Hertfords, the Rothschilds and the Pierpont Morgans have been of their pictures and miniatures, their Sèvres porcelain, or the masterpieces of Riesener Gouthière and Caffieri. The plant collector has this advantage over those famous lovers of the living works of dead artists that he can gratify his whims and vanity so much more cheaply.

"What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste?
Some Demon whispered—Visto, have a taste."

Even orchids are cheap in comparison with Rembrandts, Vandycks, Sir Joshuas and Gainsboroughs. It stands to reason that the gathering together of such treasures as may be seen at Westonbirt, at Aldenham, at Frensham, and in one or two other collector's gardens, cannot be achieved without a considerable expenditure of money, guided by consummate knowledge; but, even so, the cost is relatively small. And the owners of lesser pleasures with small outlay can profit by the experience and public spirit of those gardening magnates, both professional and amateur, who combine to send out costly expeditions to new fields of adventure and discovery in order to add to the treasure stores of horticulture.

If there be any who are so jealous of the honour of our British forests and woods that they resent any competition with their beauty, and look upon all new-comers from over the sea as undesirable

aliens, they should, at any rate, allow that, though they would be out of tune in a wild forest, they bring lovely harmonies of colour and form into the more artificial scenes with which we adorn the immediate surroundings of our country houses. They are no more foreign than the numberless flowers with which our predecessors used to furnish their beds and borders, and they have two great advantages over these, as I hope to show presently.

As to the question of fitness or unfitness, that is a matter of conditions and arrangement. I know a vast park in which the old oaks and beeches used to make up a sylvan scene of incomparable grandeur. Some years ago the owner, fired with a new and wholly uneducated enthusiasm, studded with stately forest with lovely little Japanese maples, but without any intervening masses of cultivation to make the garden blend with the primeval trees. The effect was deplorably ludicrous—nay, it was worse than ludicrous: it was an act of desecration. Had my friend been more judicious, what charming effects he might have conjured up in a suitable place with those same little crimson bushes which he condemned to play so silly a part in among his glorious secular oaks! What magical scenes have been called up with their help at Westonbirt! But those pictures were produced by knowledge.

There was a time when in spring and summer I used to look forward to the autumn, hailing its advent as the season of sport, when every day

brought some new joy. Now that I have left the autumn of life far behind me and am deep in its winter, I have no love left for the shortening days, the rustle of falling leaves, and the cold patter of the rain on the dimmed panes of glass. And yet when the sun shines, how beautiful is the Indian summer! How lovely the dismissal of the haze floating away across the valley! Yes! Autumn has its consolations.

Foreigners who have never been in this country generally think that we live like newts and frogs in a land of marshes and dismal morasses, curtained by fogs through which the sun's rays never pierce, a land sadly breeding a mysterious disease which they call "Le spleen." In the fifties, as Disraeli once put it, they looked upon us as "an insular people subject to fogs, and possessing a powerful middle class," both, in their eyes, equally objectionable. All the greater was their surprise and admiration when they came to realize the soft loveliness of our landscapes. Sixty years ago and more I was sent home from Eton for a few days' change after some trifling ailment, and my father took me, and a French friend of his who was staying with him, to Richmond. Never shall I forget that man's astonished enthusiasm when the view from Richmond Hill burst upon his sight.

It was, as good luck would have it, a rarely beautiful afternoon in October. The trees in the park were clothed in the golden russets of autumn. The

sunlight was dancing upon the river running like a broad silver ribbon through the valley—a delicate blue mist threw an exquisitely diaphanous veil over the distance. Our friend, brought up in the fallacies of the French novelists of those days, lifted his hands in amazement and stood silent.

It was my first sight of Richmond. I have travelled far and wide since then, and have seen many more startling scenes, but the haunting beauty of that autumn evening remains one of my happiest dreams. There is a mysterious charm in that landscape, with the oaks which were veterans when Henry the Eighth hunted the deer under their boughs, the lush grass, and the Thames, that sacred river, for an Eton boy without its peer in the world. It is a scene which neither Alps nor Rockies, neither the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn, nor the Great Wall of China, nor the wonders of the tropical jungle, can efface. And—it is home.

Some thirty years ago when, as I have said, autumn was still the welcome herald of sport, I, happily inspired, laid the foundation of what to-day robs it of some of its sadness. Now that the stalls in my stable are empty and the guns lie idle in the racks of the gun-room, I reap the reward. I sent to America for acorns, I bought the seed of the giant Japanese vine (*Vini coignetia*) in Tokio. From Veitch (alas! for the death of a noble firm!) I procured specimens of all the species and varieties of Japanese maples: Thunberg's berberis, the Per-

sian parrottia—these, with the various forms of rhus and other choice plants, make up a palette of colours to cheer the dool of the dying year. In October one after another the maples begin to send up tongues of fire, setting the hill-side in flames.

It is a rare treat to see the sun shining through the leaves of some trees red as the pigeon's-blood ruby; rare to see the fretted lace-work of others clothing them in a gorgeous panoply of old gold. Their neighbours are gleaming like the jewels in Oriental fable. The hollies and thorns and taller trees are draped with flamboyant curtains sent down by the huge vines—red, yellow, tawny orange, festoons falling in a riotous feast of colour.

Among all these proud foreigners the more modest yet no less beautiful native spindle-tree suffers no eclipse. A little later the American oaks begin to assert themselves. These, a little while before they turn crimson, assume all the quality of an old Chinese bronze which the patina of time has painted with the many hues of Joseph's coat mysteriously blended together in an exquisite harmony. When we watch all these, we understand the poetry of the Japanese when they talk of their mountains and forests clothed in the brocade of the maples.

It must be obvious that gardening, the object of which is the production of a succession of varied pictures which, being inspired by the observation of Nature in her many moods, might appeal to the artistic taste of a painter or stir the emotion of a poet,

presents difficulties undreamt of by the flower-bed manufacturers of fifty or sixty years ago. Their gardening was all done with compasses and straight-edge, and the geometrical result, the eccentric "knottes" worked out in alternantheras, ecneverias, golden feather and the like, savoured of nothing nearer to nature than the Tottenham Court Road.

Those were the days in which the garden, like the kitchen, was the special province of the mistress of the house. Of the latter she might know something, of the former generally nothing; and the consequence was that it was handed over to men, who, though they might be most admirable cultivators, had had no artistic training, had not had the opportunity of learning by travel, and were content to carry on certain rule-of-thumb traditions, which turned out every man's garden in the likeness of that of every other man. In the uniformly unrelieved brilliancy of geraniums, verbenas and calceolarias, of imagination or poetry there was not a trace—not even the merit of invention.

In his brilliant book, "Form and Colour," Mr. March Phillips divides the human mind into two great categories—the intellectual and the emotional. The intellectual faculty is characteristic of the West, the emotional faculty prevails in the East. Next comes the question of Form and Colour in Art. "Form," he says, "has dominated Art whenever and wherever the intellectual faculty was dominant in life; colour has dominated Art whenever and

wherever the emotional faculty has dominated life." Later in the book, when speaking of the contrast between the Art of the West and the Art of the East, he proceeds: "Form, as we were saying, is chiefly a matter of the intellect. The arts which deal with form convey ideas. Their appeal is to the mind. *Colour, on the other hand, conveys no ideas.* [My italics.] It is emotional and appeals to the senses rather than to the intellect. And this being so, it seems natural that the Western temperament, intellectual rather than sensuous, should excel in form rather than in colour; while the Eastern, sensuous rather than intellectual, should excel in colour rather than in form."

This theory of colour and form gives us much food for thought, and it is impossible not to be struck by the aptness with which it may be applied to the gardener's craft. The gorgeous colour of the one school of gardening appeals directly to the senses, and, like other similar appeals where there is no relief from monotony, it soon satiates and wearies.

The kaleidoscopic beds which remind us of Pallas Athene springing fully armed from the brain of Zeus, are at the outset the same as they will be four months later, when their glory will be ignominiously wheeled away to the rubbish heap. Day after day you look out from your window and there is no change—nothing but an eternal Oriental glare of scarlet and yellow. How can such a garden create ideas? Compare with this the garden of form.

Here there is plenty to excite ideas and fire the imagination, for here you have life with all its changes and accidents, from the tender birth of the bud to the vigour of the mature plant, the loves of the flowers, and the happy ripening of the fruit, which is the mystery of maternity.

No two days are alike; as they follow one another, each brings with it something new, some fresh beauty, some intimate revelation of Nature's secrets. And when the year has nearly run its course, when the autumn leaves fall to the ground in a shower of gold such as that which broke through Danaë's prison, there is no death or decay of the plant, no carting off to the *fosse commune*, but just a long, happy winter's sleep, enviable as that of a dormouse resting in the sure hope of a glorious new birth when the first kiss of spring shall awaken the sleeping beauty in the wood.

Colour, then, is of the East sensuous; form is of the West intellectual. It is, of course, a mere coincidence, and not a rule capable of being laid down; but as I was walking to-day in a garden of form with Mr. Phillips' theory seething in my brain, I could not but be struck by noting that, besides our own native trees, by far the greater number of those that have been naturalized here for the sake of their shape are of Western origin; while, with the exception of the American oaks, those that we value for their gorgeous colouring—such, for instance,

as the Japanese maples and vines—come to us from the East.

It is hardly worth noticing, but it was certainly curious that, wherever I looked, there I saw form transported from the West. The caravans which crossed the Rocky Mountains in search of gold, not without leaving many skeletons by the way; the orchid hunters of the Amazon, braving sickness, fevers and poisoned arrows, have enriched our pleasaunces with treasures, not to speak of the brilliantly-coloured gems of which they were primarily in search, which, could our grandfathers, and even our fathers, come to life again, would make them open their eyes wide with astonishment, wondering whether some magician could have waved his wand over their cherished grounds, changing them into fairyland.

The diplomatists, who opened up Japan in 1858, the pioneers of trade, who have penetrated into the secret places of Western China, carrying their lives in their hands, have all added to our wealth of plants, both in form and colour, but chiefly in colour. When we see the glorious velvety shafts of Lawson's Cypress, or *Libocedrus decurrens*, shooting up heavenward like church spires, when we look upon the great American conifers, so rich and so various, or among the lowlier plants, are startled by the huge leaves of the Chilian Gunneras, we cannot but admit that for form we have to thank the West.

In a later chapter, in the course of a fascinating disquisition on Byzantine architecture, Mr. Phillips goes on to say: "We must recognize that between these ideas of colour and softness there is something more than an accidental connection . . . softness and colour go together as naturally as hardness and form."

These are words which might be applied with special fitness to the garden. But although form is of its very essence hard, so far as outlines are concerned, we are not without one corrective which softens and subdues it. That corrective is atmosphere.

I hold, and I think that most fellow-craftsmen, if I may dare to reckon myself among gardeners, will agree with me, that background is absolutely essential to success; yet if you place a statue, or plant a specimen tree, immediately against the finest background that imagination could desire, it will remain hard and shorn of much of its charm, because it will lack the softening influence of atmosphere.

I know no better illustration of this than the way in which the Venus of Milo is shown at the Louvre. It is so skillfully placed that the air plays all round it, and the outlines of the marble melt, as it were, into the surrounding atmosphere. Were it pressed, as statues so often are, close against a curtain or a dead wall, the supreme beauty of the goddess would be cruelly sacrificed. The form, the inspiration of the sculptor, would be there, but the hardness of the

material would be unredeemed; it would represent death instead of life. That is why so many photographic portraits fail to render beauty. The model is placed immediately in front of a screen—all sense of aerial perspective is lost—and the result is, from an artistic point of view, a deadly failure, even should the photograph be technically perfect, so far as optics and chemistry are concerned. No composition is good, or even tolerable, where aerial perspective is neglected, and that is as true in gardening as it is in the plastic arts.

It is the lack of aerial perspective—in other words, of atmosphere—which so fatally mars the very real beauty of Oriental art. In the paintings of the Chinese artists, and the extravagantly-admired coloured prints of the famous wood engravers of Japan, there is often a rare skill of colour and a firmness of hand worthy of Giotto, especially in the matchless drawing of flowing lines such as drapery. The birds and trees and grasses of the Kano school, the lovely outlines of the landscape painters, the monkeys and deer of Chosen, are in many respects wonderful. But there is almost always something wanting. For want of aerial perspective the lines remain rigid; there is no soft atmospheric roundness, and on that account the pictures fail to satisfy. The result is like the fascinating work of very clever children.

Compare with the vaunted eighteenth-century art of Japan the contemporary work of the French

painters, Watteau, Lancret, Fragonard, who, to my mind, have never been excelled in their rendering of the mystery of atmosphere. See how their woodland scenes melt into unfathomable distances like those of the great Dutchmen, such as Cuyp and others. There you have the poetry of nature and of gardens, and when you are laying out your domain and combining your succession of pictures and surprises, ask yourself this question: Would Watteau have found here anything worthy of his brush? To be sure you cannot have his pretty powdered dames, and his musical courtiers, with their viols and tabors and flutes. But they were mere accessories. That which so obviously gave him the greatest joy—that upon which he bestowed his supreme skill—was the scenery in which he placed them to give it life, even though that life should have something of a meretricious and theatrical character.

If it be true, according to Phillips, that softness and colour, hardness and form, go together, we can account for the prevalence of the garden of mere colour in the days when the lady of the house ruled the gardener. The garden of colour is feminine and emotional; the garden of form masculine and intellectual—it is the garden of the master.

And here we come to something akin to the Chinese doctrine of Yang and Yin, the male and female principles ruling creation. The garden of form belongs to Yang, the garden of colour to Yin. This is not intended in any way to undervalue the wo-

man's influence. It is only natural that a woman who is all softness and emotion should surround herself with effects which mirror her own sweet nature. The man, on the other hand, strong and hard, will be inclined to try and imitate the sterner pictures of creation. He will work in what Addison called the Pindaric style "without affecting the nicer elegancies of Art."

Take the books which have been written upon the subject; their name is legion. The women's books, full of delicate charm, busy themselves for the most part with the marriage of colours, the blending of hues, the reconciliation of hostile shades. They are very clever, very ingenious, very attractive; but, setting on one side a few of the great lady writers, among whom Miss Willmott and Miss Jekyll are queens, they represent no more than the millinery of plants—the stockings to match the frock.

Set against these the rugged masculine vigour of a writer like William Robinson, the man to whom, above all others, is due the notable improvement which has grown in horticultural taste during the last forty years. From him you will learn much, for he knows much, and he can teach it. If you have his book, "The English Flower Garden," you will need no other, for it will give you all the knowledge which you require. Among the women's books, as I have said, there are, of course, delightful exceptions; but of the bulk of them the best that can be said is that they are gentle and morally

innocuous. For all that is delicate and charming and alluring, joined to many of the highest and robust qualities which adorn mankind, I have been all my life a worshipper of the Yin principle; but when it comes to gardening and the writing of books on gardening, give me the Yang, give me William Robinson.

All men love trees, and it is small wonder that the sight of objects so beautiful should have led men to think of them with awe as under the special care, or even as the dwelling-places, of gods and goddesses; indeed, the connection of trees with religion is as old as the conception of the deity itself. North and south, east and west, we find the same idea.

In the Scandinavian Sagas the mystic Ash Ygdrasil is the tree of life, of time, and of space. Its branches spread over the whole world and its top reaches above the heavens. Its roots strike in three directions: the one down to Hvergelmer, the well of the dragon Nidhug; the second to the fountain of Mimer, the source of wisdom and wit, for a drink of which Odin pawned his eye with Mimer; the third is in Asgard, close to the fountain of Urd the Norn of the Past, where the gods, riding over the Bifroth Bridge—the rainbow—assemble to sit in judgment. Here dwell the three Norns: Urd the Norn of the Past, Verdande the Norn of the Present, and Skuld the Norn of the Future; and here

they weave the web of faith for you and me and all mankind.

It is strange how men have been fascinated by the rough and rugged Icelandic mythology born of ice and snow and rocks lashed by glacial winds; and nights that are light as day, days that are black as night; an existence which was one long fight against the elements, and struggle for life with bears and wolves. The Roman poets, on the other hand, born in the soft, voluptuous creed of the Greeks, a religion in which the gods and goddesses, much too human, were worshipped in temples built amid the enchanting fragrance of roseleaf islands, shuddered at the very idea of the North. For them there would have been nothing but terror in those strong Sagas, which in other countries gave birth to noble poetry and stately music.

As told by Ovid, the story of the punishment of Erisichthon, who mocked the gods and would not sacrifice at their altars, illustrates the worship of trees and also the dread of the inhospitable North, and yet a North that was no Arctic region; nothing, indeed, more terrible than the Caucasus.

In ancient Thessaly, in the midst of a wood sacred to Ceres, there stood an oak, a sturdy veteran, a grove in itself, covered with votive offerings, the tokens of the honour which was paid to it. Round it the Dryads, hand in hand, were wont to hold their choirs and dance in festive revelry. It

was a holy tree, but in spite of all its sanctity, against it Erisichthon raised his sacrilegious axe and bade his men strike home, swearing, when they hesitated, that were the tree not merely dear to the goddess, but if it were the goddess herself, it should lie low and kiss the earth with its topmost boughs. Under the stroke of the axe the sacred tree groaned; its leaves and acorns, and even the branches turned pale. But when the impious hand inflicted the first cruel wound, blood flowed as from a bull at a sacrifice before the altars. Horrified, the men were stricken dumb, and one, bolder than the others, would fain have put a stop to the crime and stayed the falling axe.

“Be this the guerdon of thy piety?” cried the Thessalian, turning the weapon against the man; severed his head from his body, and repeated his attack upon the tree. From the heart of the oak there came a voice, saying, “Under this tree am I, a nymph beloved by Ceres, and my dying prophecy is that thy deeds shall be punished as the consolation for my death.” Nothing stops him from his crime; at last, under the many blows, and dragged by ropes, the tree collapses, and with its weight breaks down much of the grove.

The mourning Dryads, stricken by their loss, don black robes and pray to Ceres for the punishment of Erisichthon. The goddess nods assent; she shakes the fields heavy with crops, and contrives for him a punishment which would be pitiable had

he not forfeited pity by his deeds, dooming him to be destroyed by pestilential hunger. But since this may not be attempted by the goddess herself, for the fates will not that Ceres and famine should co-exist, she charges one of the mountain nymphs to summon Famine from the cold and bleak shores of Scythia, that barren land where there is neither corn nor tree—the abode of dull frost, pallor, shivering and hunger. Thus does the goddess punish the impious sinner, and so she tortures him until he is driven to gnaw at his own limbs. (Ovid. *Met.* 740.) Ovid's description of hunger as a distinct being called to wreak vengeance is as gruesome as anything that I know of in poetry.

The idea that trees are inhabited by supernatural beings, spirits or lesser gods, is common enough in the folk-lore of all countries, and that is what has given rise to the fables of trees which bleed and utter cries if they are cruelly treated. In Japan there are endless pretty and fanciful stories, in which the spirits of beautiful trees—often their matchless cherry trees—fall in love with and bewitch the sons or daughters of men. Nothing is prettier in that country, so rich in beauty, than the Shinto shrines nestling in choice spots among the forest-clad mountains. Around each temple are planted trees which are sacred to, and under the special protection of, the tutelary deity of the place. And in connection with them there is a custom called "Ushi no Toki Mairi" (Going to worship

at the hour of the ox).* It is practised by jealous women who wish to be revenged on their faithless lovers or husbands, and reminds us of those waxen dolls with which the witches and adepts in black magic of the Middle Ages, and in ancient Greece, according to Theocritus, were wont to pretend that they could rid their patron of their enemies.

When the world is at rest, at two in the morning, the hour of which the ox is the symbol, the woman rises; she dons a white robe and high sandals or clogs; her coif is a metal tripod in which are thrust three lighted candles; round her neck she hangs a mirror, which falls upon her bosom; in her left hand she carries a small straw figure, the effigy of the lover who has deserted her, and in her right she grasps a hammer and nails, with which she fastens the figure to one of the sacred trees which surround the shrine. There she prays for the death of the traitor, vowing that if her petition be heard she will

* The Japanese, following the horology of the Chinese, used to divide the day of 24 hours into 12 periods, each of which had its sign, something like the sign of the Zodiac.

Midnight until	2 a.m.	was	the	hour	of	the	Rat
2 a.m. "	4 a.m.	"	"	"	"	"	Ox
4 a.m. "	6 a.m.	"	"	"	"	"	Tiger
6 a.m. "	8 a.m.	"	"	"	"	"	Hare
8 a.m. "	10 a.m.	"	"	"	"	"	Dragon
10 a.m. "	12 noon	"	"	"	"	"	Snake
12 noon "	2 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	Horse
2 p.m. "	4 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	Ram
4 p.m. "	6 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	Ape
6 p.m. "	8 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	Cock
8 p.m. "	10 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	Hog
10 p.m. "	midnight	"	"	"	"	"	Fox

herself pull out the nails which now offend the god by wounding the mystic tree. Night after night she comes to the shrine, and each night she drives in two or more nails, believing that every nail will shorten her lover's life, for the god, to save his beloved tree, will surely strike him dead.*

Whether this custom still prevails, I know not. Fifty years ago I was assured that it was "very much alive." Habits have undergone a mighty change since then, but superstition dies hard, and there are many out-of-the-way places even in Japan into which the newness of things has hardly penetrated. It must have been a ghostly sight to meet a maiden thus harnessed in the grove of the god on a dark night.

Lafcadio Hearn, that wayward child of the muses, a prose poet if ever there was such an one, who, after wandering for many years through untold misery and suffering, at last found rest and his soul in Japan, has left to us as precious legacies many a rare conceit which would fit in well here. It would have been strange if he, a mystic himself, had not been willingly haunted by the folk-lore of the country which he loved, a country "*fabulosa et externis miraculis adsimilata*." Sometimes, indeed, he was more Catholic than the Pope, living in Japan that was almost a dreamland of his own wild fancy. And yet he was a creature of curious contradic-

* See my "Tales of Old Japan: the Loves of Gompachi and Komurasaki."

tions, for he seems to be half in earnest, half mocking, when he holds us spellbound with weird tales of goblin trees, luring men to love or to death; of a camellia tree which listens to the prayers of lovers; of other camellias which, like spectres, walk about at night, the terror of mankind. "There was one in the garden of a Matsné Samurai which did this so much that it had to be cut down. Then it writhed its arms and groaned, and blood spurted at every stroke of the axe."

Like every other writer, native and foreign, Lafcadio Hearn is entranced by the loveliness of the cherry blossom, the emblem of all that is bodily delicate and spiritually beautiful. He quotes an old stanza, which says: "If one should ask you concerning the heart of a true Samurai, point to the mountain cherry flower gleaming in the morning sun." Again: "As the cherry flower is first among flowers, so should the warrior be first among men." By this nature-loving people, the highest form of female beauty and excellence is symbolized by the willow for grace, the cherry flower for youthful charm, the plum blossom for virtue and sweetness. I should add that the oval outline of the melon seed represents in the shape of the face the type of high breeding and aristocratic distinction. The poets are never weary of drawing upon the cherry flower for their metaphors. A Japanese gentleman, looking out upon a snow-storm, will say: "See how the petals of the cherries are drifting before the wind."

The Yanagi—the weeping willow—is a much haunted tree. Here is a story told by Lafcadio Hearn which is worth quoting:

“There is a rather pretty legend—recalling the old Greek dream of Dryads—about a willow tree which grew in the garden of a Samurai of Kyoto. Owing to its weird reputation, the tenant of the homestead desired to cut it down; but another Samurai dissuaded him, saying: ‘Rather sell it to me, that I may plant it in my garden. That tree has a soul; it were cruel to destroy its life.’ Thus purchased and transplanted, the Yanagi flourished well in its new home, and its spirit, out of gratitude, took the form of a beautiful woman, and became the wife of the Samurai who had befriended it. A charming boy was the result of this union. A few years later the Daimio to whom the ground belonged gave orders that the tree should be cut down. Then the wife wept bitterly, and for the first time revealed to her husband the whole story. ‘And now,’ she added, ‘I know that I must die, but our child will live and you will always love him. This thought is my only solace.’ Vainly the astonished husband sought to retain her. Bidding him farewell for ever, she vanished into the tree. Needless to say, that the Samurai did everything in his power to persuade the Daimio to forgo his purpose. The prince wanted the tree for the reparation of a great Buddhist temple, the Sanjiusangendo.” (The Temple of the 33,333 images of Kwannon, the Goddess of

Mercy.) "The tree was felled, but, having fallen, it suddenly became so heavy that three hundred men could not move it. Then the child, taking a branch in his little hand, said 'Come,' and the tree followed him, gliding along the ground to the court of the temple."

You may bless the Yanagi for offering you a sure cure for the toothache. Haunted it is bound to be, and if you suffer, drive nails into it until the spirit of the tree, to save its home, relieves you of the pain. Are you a dreamer of dreams? Then if your climate be mild, without fail, see that you are not without a Nanten among your shrubs. Hide it away in some sheltered spot, both for its own sake and for yours, and let it be your trusted confidant. If the gods should send you evil and racking dreams, rise early and whisper the terror to your Nanten, and it shall come to naught. Science has corrupted the Japanese name Nanten into *Nandina*, and, for some reason best known to themselves, botanists have added the altogether ridiculous and senseless suffix *domestica*. Perhaps such an outrage may have robbed the plant of its virtues; we can but try it.

To go back to our cherries. In the grounds of an old Scottish castle, rich in ghostly stories and blood-curdling legends, there stands an old gean tree (wild cherry). It is the belief of the countryside that this old tree is haunted by the spirit of a former mistress of the castle, a lady who, as tradi-

tion has it, suffered much in her life-time and cannot rest in death. One day, some forty years ago, I started off from a neighbouring place to pay a visit at the castle with "Hang-theology" Rogers, the famous rector of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, than whom no brighter companion ever cheered a long, cold drive in a rather rickety dog-cart. We arrived just as the large party in the house were gathering together in the drawing-room after luncheon. We were met by long and rather pale faces. Obviously something had happened—nobody seemed at ease. At last an old lady, who was among the guests, took me on one side and told me what all this meant.

That morning, a visitor who was driving up to the house, when he came to the gean tree, saw the figure of a woman come out of it, glide for some distance beside him, and then vanish. Many of the people in the castle, who happened to be looking out of the drawing-room window at the time, saw the wonder, and the old lady added that she herself, having gone up to her bedroom to put on her bonnet, distinctly saw the apparition from her window, which was immediately over the drawing-room. All these people were absolutely convinced that, like the visitor in his dog-cart, they had seen the ghost which haunted the gean tree. I have told the story without addition or ornament, exactly as I heard it an hour or two after its occurrence and while the witnesses were still under the spell. It could not

fail to remind me of the tales of Bakémonozakura, the haunted cherry trees of Japanese legend, and it seemed worthy to be set down beside them.

The ancient Egyptians, though they worshipped onions and garlic, for which they were handsomely ridiculed by Juvenal, seem to have paid little respect to trees, probably because, besides the palm, so few were known to them. There is, however, according to that wonderful book, Sir James Fraser's "Golden Bough," some evidence to show that they believed that spirits haunted trees; at any rate, the tamarisk was sacred to Osiris—the god and ruler who represented the principle of good, as his brother Typho did that of evil. The story of the death of Osiris is curious as a contradiction of the idea of immortality with which deity is usually endowed. The god, having become King of Egypt, devoted himself to the civilization of his people, and to further that end, set out to travel over the world, leaving his wife Isis to reign in his place. When he came back, Typho, with other conspirators, among whom was an Ethiopian queen, named Aso, plotted to kill his brother. So, having procured the exact measurement of Osiris, he caused a box to be made to fit him, and having invited Osiris to a feast, he caused the box, which was of rare workmanship, to be brought in, saying he would give it to any one present whom it would fit. All the guests tried it in vain; at last Osiris laid himself down in it, and the conspirators, rushing forward, fastened down the

lid with nails and molten lead. Then the box was carried to the riverside. It floated down the stream and was carried by the waves of the sea to the coast of Byblos, and lodged in the branches of a tamarisk bush. There is much more of this fable in Sir Gardner Wilkinson's great book—not all of it very edifying reading; but that is how the tamarisk became a sacred tree.

While treating of the superstitions and legends belonging to trees, it has been impossible to avoid touching upon the belief in ghosts. That faith exists in every part of the world. The fetichists of the African priests, the totemists of North America, the wildest savages of the South Seas with their uncouth idols, the aborigines of Australia and New Zealand—all stand in terror of ghosts. I long years ago translated a collection of Pekingese stories of haunted houses; but in many moves and journeys the manuscript has been lost—no great matter of regret, for these tales are always the same, the two leading causes for apparitions being remorse or revenge. The story of the ghost of Sakura Sogoro, perhaps the most famous ghost story of the Far East, which I have translated in my "Tales of Old Japan," has, apart from its local colouring, no feature differing from many such traditions which have been handed down in Europe. But the true interest of these superstitions, call them fables, myths—what you will—lies in the proof that all over the world there is implanted in man the instinc-

tive conviction that death is not the end of all things—the mere return of dust to dust, of ashes to ashes; if that were so, there could be no thought of ghosts. The belief depends upon the existence of that mysterious intuitive feeling that when the thread of fate has been severed, there still remains another life which death itself cannot kill, and that other life is the soul.

* * * * *

But the fairies—where are they? Can it be that the Bakémono-zakura—the haunted cherry trees of Japan—when they were ruthlessly torn out of the soil of the country of the gods ten years ago, indignantly burst their barken bonds, and taking wing for refuge to the sacred groves of Mount Fugi, from some wild bird's eyrie watched their beloved old homes being wafted away to new and uncertain climes across the terrors of the Pacific Ocean? And yet often, even here, I see a merry band of flaxen-haired dwarfs playing about the enchanted trees. Fairyland is rich in surprises and mystifications. Who knows? Perhaps these little sprites are themselves fairies who have chosen for their abode the forsaken dwellings of the dark eastern Bakémono—"good folk" sent by a kindly Providence to shed a fleeting ray of sunshine of poetry over the wintry prose of an octogenarian's life.

CHAPTER V

QUEEN VICTORIA AND MARIA THERESIA

RARELY, indeed, does the student in history come across two personalities so entirely in unison at almost all points as those of the Austrian Empress Maria Theresia and our own Queen Victoria. Both were essentially great sovereigns, both essentially good women. Our own Queen exercised an authority which was in one sense even more remarkable than that of the Empress; for whereas the latter was a commanding figure in an age when the glamour of autocracy had not yet faded away, Queen Victoria, by sheer force of character, maintained the prestige of royalty against the flowing tide of a democracy which was becoming daily more and more self-asserting. Indeed, she did more than maintain it—she summoned it from the dead; for in the two reigns which preceded hers it had perished, as men then thought, without hope of resurrection.

In all save their outward appearance the likeness between the two august ladies was such that it almost seemed as if the one was the reincarnation of the other; as if the soul of the mighty Austrian had passed into the Queen. An earnest and deep piety

was the foundation of both characters, though they would have been utterly opposed in the form of its exercise. Maria Theresia was the faithful daughter of the Church of Rome, Queen Victoria the no less faithful and loving child of the Reformation. In both religion was a passion.

There has been a recent republication of the "Memoirs of Frau Pichler," the Viennese poetess and authoress, whose *salon* at the end of the eighteenth and during the early part of the nineteenth century was so famous that people said that there were two things which no stranger coming to Vienna could afford to miss seeing—St. Stephen's Cathedral and Frau Pichler. Those memoirs, admirably edited and furnished with copious notes by one Emil Blümml, throw an interesting light upon the private and intimate life of Maria Theresia, and as we follow these reminiscences, we cannot but be struck by the many links in the chain of similarity of which I have spoken above.

Both Queen Victoria and the Empress were deeply penetrated with that sense of the Royal Caste which is too apt to raise an insurmountable boundary against social intercourse. But if Royalty itself stands apart, there is also an instinctive aloofness from it in those who are of high position but yet subjects; so that the intimacies of Sovereigns and royal personages are found rather among their personal attendants than among the nobles and powerful officials who form their courts. Es-



THE EMPRESS MARIE THERESIA
From an engraving after a painting by Meytens

pecially is this bound to be the case where princesses are concerned. Their tirewomen and dressers are far more capable than chamberlains and secretaries of state of judging their private idiosyncrasies; so, in order to know what manner of woman this or that queen may have been, we are fain to climb the backstairs—where such a way is open to us, as it is in the case of Maria Theresia.

The adoption of Frau Pichler's mother by the great Empress is just such a pathetic story, not without a pinch of the salt of romance, as would have touched the kind heart of Queen Victoria, and, indeed, we can well fancy her in like circumstances behaving exactly as Maria Theresia did.

In the month of May, 1744, the Wolfenbüttel Regiment of Infantry was moved from Hungary to Vienna. A poor old lieutenant, fifty years of age, named Friedrich Hieronymus, a widower, had contrived—with what pains and anxiety who can tell?—to take with him on the march his only child, a little daughter aged four. Hardly had he reached Vienna when he caught a chill, inflammation of the lungs set in and he died, full of terror for the future of his little Charlotte, whom he was to leave penniless and destitute in what was to him a foreign country, among strangers professing a religion which was abhorrent to him—for he was a Protestant. His last tender words were for her. "Poor child! what will become of thee?" Throughout her long life those painfully uttered words, torn from

the dying man's soul, remained graven in her heart, unforgettable. His brother officers, good charitable souls, probably themselves none too well furnished with this world's goods, took charge of the babe, who became from thenceforth the "fille du Régiment." The pathetic story came to the ears of Maria Theresa, who had a soft place in her heart for the Wolfenbüttel Regiment, which was named after the family of her mother, the Empress Elizabeth. She sent for the child, but the officers of the regiment, deeply imbued with a sense of loyalty to their dead comrade, did all that was in their power to hinder the babe from falling into the hands of an aggressively religious Catholic.

They hid her in a suburb of Vienna, but the Empress's agents were too clever for them, and the child was brought to Court, where, as the Wolfenbüttels had foreseen, she was brought up in the strictest doctrines of the Roman Church, under the charge of a Spanish lady, Isabella Duplessis, and was especially educated with a view to entering the Empress's service as tirewoman. Her life was now very different from what might have been expected for the baby that followed the drum. She became the playmate of the Imperial children, amongst them of the unhappy Queen Marie Antoinette, and so the years went by in all the luxury of a sumptuous court.

Little Charlotte proved herself worthy of her good fortune; indeed, so quick and nimble-witted

was she, that when she had reached the age of thirteen she was already deemed fit to enter upon her duties about her great mistress, not only as tirewoman, but also as reader. To this end she had been early handed over to the care of Gräfin Fuchs, the tenderly-loved nurse and governess of the Empress, who had such an affection for her that when she died she was buried in the vault of the Capucins, the last home of the Imperial Family.

In spite of the advice given by Hippolochus to Glaucus, it is not always an unmixed advantage so to excel as to make oneself indispensable. This little Charlotte soon found out, for her skill in hair-dressing was such that the Empress, who was so particular about her hair that she would sometimes have it done and undone four or five times before she was satisfied, could not do without her. Maria Theresia, who was without a spark of coquetry and had neither eyes nor thought for any man but her husband, had all a woman's instinctive love of display, and took a great delight in her beauty for its own sake.

None of the other tirewomen had Charlotte's cunning fingers, and the same thing applied to her reading. German, French, Italian and Latin came to the child with equal facility, and all these were found in the dispatches which she had to read aloud to the Empress. French and Italian were the languages of the Opera and of the elegances of the Court. On one occasion when the Empress was ex-

pecting a baby, she had a bet with Count Dietrichstein as to the sex of the infant. She wagered for a girl, he for a boy—the Empress won. The count sent her a piece of porcelain with a portrait of himself kneeling, and these words written by Metastasio, the Poet Laureate of the Court:

“Perdo, è ver, l’ augusta figlia
A pagar m’ ha condannato,
Ma s’ è ver che a te somiglia
Tutto il mondo ha guadagnato.”

A pretty compliment! The babe, Marie Antoinette, born to be Queen of Beauty and of Sorrow, was worthy of it.

Talking of languages, it is strange to read of how small account German was at the Court of Vienna. The Emperor Francis I., as a Lorrainer, hardly understood it and never spoke it, and the people of his service were mostly Lorrainers or Netherlanders. The Empress herself did not speak correct German; she used the vulgarest Viennese patois, and Frau Pichler tells an amusing story of how a young Saxon lady, who had been appointed as one of her mother’s colleagues, came to her in despair one morning to beg her help. The Empress had ordered her to go and fetch “das blabe Buich.” What could Her Majesty mean? Charlotte laughed, and told her to go and get “das blaue Buch.” The Saxon girl, Karoline Mercier, would not believe her—but the blue book it was. If she could not master German, the Empress, like Queen Victoria,

was familiar with French and Italian. Our Queen was very fond of showing her fluency in German and French, and on her drives would often stop her carriage for the joy of a chat with some poor Italian organ-grinder in his own soft tongue. Latin, which the Empress knew intimately, was the means of communication with her Hungarian magnates. She loved the language and them, for so she was reminded of the day—the 11th of September, 1741—when she, threatened by half Europe with the loss of the states which the hostile Powers had once guaranteed, went to Pressburg, met the nobles of Hungary in their parliament, and appealed to them for protection for herself and her child, the future Emperor Joseph. Her cry for help was not in vain. Touched to the quick by the sight of the lovely weeping Empress, the proud Magyars, old and young, the flower of a noble chivalry, drew their swords and swore to die for the beautiful woman, who was their *King*. A universal conscription was decreed. It was a triple triumph, upon which she loved to look back—the triumph of Virtue, of Right, and last, but not least, of Beauty.

The service of Maria Theresia's handmaidens was no sinecure. In summer she rose at five o'clock—in winter a little later—and rang for her girls, who had to appear fully dressed in hoop-petticoats, and with the marvellous edifices of hair which the fashion of the day exacted. To achieve this, the young ladies had to get up in the middle

of the night, and this was especially hard upon Charlotte, who had night after night to read aloud for long hours after the Empress had gone to bed. But Charlotte was so quick, and knew the Empress's taste so well that, whatever happened, she must be present at the morning toilette, and ready to attend upon her mistress during and after supper—a light meal, of which Her Majesty always partook in her private room. Busy worker as the Empress was, she seems to have depended entirely upon having her State papers read aloud to her, and so Charlotte became acquainted very early in life with many important State secrets. But she was a discreet little soul and knew how to hold her tongue, and so retained the confidence of her Imperial mistress as long as that wonderful woman lived.

The portrait which Frau Pichler has left behind her of the great lady, partly drawn from her mother's stories of her, partly from her own memories of the days when as a little girl she used to be taken by special command to Schönbrunn or the Burg in Vienna, is fascinating. In her youth the Empress had been extremely beautiful, and though in middle life she grew large and unwieldy, and had to be taken up to her rooms in a lift—wafted through the air by fairies, as it seemed to the child whom she took with her—she retained to the end that wonderful gift of grace and of what is called “presence,” which is so keenly felt and so impossible

to describe. Kindly she was, too, and of a motherly sweetness with children. Frau Pichler tells us how on one occasion, when the Empress had sent her to an adjoining room on some small errand, she slipped and fell, breaking her fan, and burst into tears. The kind Empress hurried after her, comforted her, and gave her a new fan—a precious relic, to be treasured as we may well believe for a lifetime.

Maria Theresia was the daughter of the Emperor Charles the Sixth, who, being without a male heir, named her as his successor by “pragmatic sanction”—a Byzantine term for an ordinance issued arbitrarily by the head of an empire or kingdom. She succeeded to the various thrones of her father on his death in 1740, and associated with herself as Emperor her husband, Duke Francis of Lorraine, who had been her playfellow and whom she had married in 1736. In spite of his numerous infidelities, she adored him. Albeit, so far as politics were concerned, he was no great help to her; so though he bore the title of Emperor, she remained unaided at the helm. Hers was no easy task. In spite of scraps of paper and guarantees, a coalition between Prussia, France, Bavaria, the Palatinate, Saxony, Sardinia, Naples and Spain—a pack of hungry war-dogs, all tearing at her on every side, each howling for his pound of flesh—threatened to devour her. She had only England and Hungary on her side; but, like Abdul Hamid in our own times, she could count upon the quarrel between her

foes. Prussia was the arch-enemy. Prussia, which we are now told, was the original subject of the "Hymn of Hate," written, *teste* the *Morning Post*, by the revolutionary Herweg in 1841, for which Herr Lissauer, who substituted England for Prussia, has been decorated by a grateful Kaiser.* Prussia, of which Heine wrote: "I utterly loathe this Prussia, this stiff, hypocritical, sanctimonious Prussia, this Tartuffe among the nations." †

Like our own Queen, Maria Theresia was essentially a woman of business. She personally directed the affairs of her Empire, issuing her commands to her ministers, and the little orphan Charlotte, as we have seen, for many years acted as her secretary and reader. The duties were no sinecure, and although no doubt the position of a young lady of the Court was one of great luxury in some respects and greatly coveted, there were also some hardships with which those chosen maids had to put up. The Empress was large and corpulent; she could not bear warmth, and so her ladies had to perform their duties in a thorough draught, even when snow was being driven in at the windows, falling on to the State papers which Charlotte was reading aloud to her.

In spite of her dread of heat, so long as her limbs would carry her, the Empress, devout and exact in all religious observances, would on Corpus

* *Morning Post*, May 8th, 1915.

† Quoted in the *Spectator*, May 8th, 1915.

Christi day, in the height of summer, piously accompany the sacred procession on foot. One broiling June day she came back from this ceremony violently heated and tired, having walked half across the town under the sun, had to be undressed, and have her hair taken down, and sat in a thorough draught, eating strawberries and drinking lemonade, while Charlotte brushed and combed out her hair, which was so wet that the poor girl had to keep wiping her hands. How Maria Theresia would have enjoyed one of Queen Victoria's picnics on Lochnagar in a November blizzard!

One of the difficulties with which those responsible for the management of the public ceremonials in which our Queen took part had to deal, was the regulation of the temperature. The enduring of heat was to her as to Maria Theresia, a misery and an impossibility. She could put up with any other discomfort and fatigue; but heat was unbearable. The Emperor Joseph, who did not inherit his mother's imperviousness to cold, had to visit her in furs. Kaunitz, a privileged minister, was the only person who dared to shut the window. "How do you manage when you go to Balmoral?" I once asked Lord Beaconsfield, who was a chilly mortal. "The Queen is very gracious," was the answer, "she excuses me from going there."

In dealing with the affairs of State both rulers showed themselves to be women of strong character and indefatigable industry. Their methods, of

necessity, differed widely. The one, as I have said above, was an autocrat; the other, a constitutional sovereign, deeply imbued with the sense of her own limitations, and yet such a mistress of public business, of constitutional law and of precedent, that she often dominated the councils of her ministers, many of whom recognized in her their guide and instructress in cases of difficulty. Nowhere was this more evident than in her treatment of foreign affairs. There she was no more a negligible quantity than Maria Theresia had been; no matter who might be Secretary of State, there was always a very real power in the background, and that power was the Queen. It would be easy to multiply instances, but we need only point to two cases: the Danish Duchies' question in 1864, where, in obedience to what she believed to be the wishes of her dead husband, she took what is now shown to have been an unfortunate line; and, secondly, the dispute with the United States on the Trent question in 1861, where she, with the assistance of the Prince Consort, used all her influence to hinder what would have been a disastrous war, an unthinkable calamity.

The mention of the Prince Consort brings into strong relief two pictures, in which it is difficult to say whether we are more startled by the likeness or puzzled by the violence of the contrasts. In both cases we see a marriage of true love, in each of which a prince of a small reigning family

was raised, not for reasons of State, but by pure affection, to share the glories of a vast empire and a throne before which countless peoples bowed. There the likeness between the two husbands comes to an end.

In Prince Albert Queen Victoria found not only a faithful and devoted lover, but a helpmate, who was ever at her side, and, young as he was, shared the heavy burthens which she had to bear, and brought to her councils all the store of wisdom and statesmanship with which he had been endowed by that astute mentor, Baron Stockmar. Not the least part of his merit was his self-effacement; yet in spite of it he aroused unreasoning jealousies, for which his intimacy and the Queen's with the same old German physician was in no small measure accountable. The Emperor Francis, on the contrary, was of no assistance to Maria Theresia. Strikingly handsome, physically as grand a man perhaps as Prince Albert, he had none of the Prince's serious qualities. He was essentially and fatally charming, but of politics and the affairs of State he took no heed; all that he cared for were his flirtations, his bric-à-brac, and his collection of coins and medals.

He was what is called "a dangerous man," and when "a dangerous man" is an Emperor to boot—Well! But such as he was, his Empress loved him with all her soul, content to take upon her own shoulders the drudgery of sovereignty, and leaving to him its gewgaws and the enjoyment of a brilliant

idleness. If she ever knew of them she forgave him his infidelities, and, like our Queen, worshipping the ground upon which her husband trod, she never looked at another man, nor cared for any admiration but his. As Frau Pichler rather quaintly observes, had she done so her maidens must have known of it. We are told that no man is a hero to his valet. For a woman to be virtuous to her Abigail, she must be as chaste as Diana before those compromising visits to Endymion, of which we may be sure that her nymphs were well aware.

No breath of scandal ever dimmed the mirror of the Empress's fair fame. Queen Victoria herself was not more stern in the repression of anything approaching loose or unseemly talk. She considered it to be the duty of persons in high places to repress any lack of decorum, and their privilege to set an example to be followed by others. To her daughter, the Queen of Naples, she wrote: "It is our duty to remember that a word in season or a grave look will silence those who indulge in unlicensed speech, and have an excellent general effect." Nothing better nails to the counter the lies of Frederick the Great, so characteristically Prussian, than the fact that the capital, which up to her time had been notorious for the laxity of its morals, was described by Sir John Moore towards the end of her reign in very laudatory language. "I can imagine," he says, "no city in Europe where a young gentleman would see fewer ex-

amples, or have fewer opportunities of deep gaming, open profligacy, or gross debauchery than in Vienna." This, as her biographer, Mary Maxwell Moffat, says, is a great testimony to the uplifting influence of the Empress-Queen. That the influence was personal is proved by the relapse of Vienna during the nineteenth century. By precept and example, she cast out the swine, but when she was gone they came back again.

It was the irony of fate that neither the Empress's virtues, her great beauty, her sweet disposition, nor the prestige of her glorious position were able to clip the wings of her flighty and too attractive husband. That she had some inkling of her failure is clear from the advice that she once gave to her favourite maiden Charlotte: "Be warned and do not marry a man who has nothing to do." Queen Victoria was more fortunate. Her marriage remained a union of hearts, of which time itself had no power to relax the bonds.

In all that concerns art Queen Victoria was essentially a woman of her own time, and it is in no sense derogatory to her to say that it was certainly not a happy time. In the plastic arts she had not the talent of her two brilliant daughters, the Empress Frederick and Princess Louise. It is true that the sketch-book was the constant companion of her travels, and illustrated the diary of her travels; but her execution did not go much beyond the boundaries of the school-girl's album.

The painters whom she chose to employ as portraitists—Winterhalter, Landseer, Von Angeli—were unluckily chosen. She admired and patronized Leighton, but she would not hear of being painted by Millais or Watts. Music was her delight, and so it was with Maria Theresia; both ladies loved the Italian school, both were themselves gifted with lovely voices and had been well trained. Indeed, in the Hapsburg family the talent was hereditary; all the older members of it were capable musicians, and Charles the Sixth would himself accompany their chamber music on the harpsichord.

Mrs. Moffat quotes a letter of Maria Theresia, in which she writes: "As for dramatic music, I confess that I would rather have the slightest Italian thing than all the works of our composers, Gaisman, Gluck and others. For instrumental music we have a certain Haydn, who has good ideas, but he is just beginning to be known." Strange words, coming from the Sovereign of the capital which was to be the home, above all others, of the greatest composers of the world. Mozart she knew as a child of six, when he sat upon her lap to play, and, tumbling down, was picked up by the little Archduchess Marie Antoinette, to whom in gratitude he at once proposed marriage!

The tender care and loving kindness with which Queen Victoria treated all those, from the highest to the humblest, who were in any sense dependent upon her, is a matter of common knowledge. She

shared in their joys, she sympathized with their sorrows, interested herself in all the every-day changes and chances of their lives. The unclouded happiness of her own all too brief married life had penetrated her soul with the belief that nothing could compare with the bliss of a loving union. This she showed even in a case where a young man in whom she took a deep interest, and for whom she had destined what would have been a very advantageous marriage, disappointed her by making an unsuitable match. Her answer to one who spoke unkindly of this was characteristic and touching. "After all," she said, sweetly excusing him, "perhaps they loved one another." That in her mind was obviously the essential.

The account of the marriage of the Austrian Empress's favourite tirewoman is worth recording, not only as showing a parallel to this sweetly indulgent nature of our Queen, but also as giving us a curious picture of the formalities of the old Court of Vienna.

Upon her maidens the Empress spent an almost motherly care. When not on duty they might go out, but must tell Her Majesty whither they were bound, and then an Imperial carriage was placed at their disposal; when not on duty, they were always allowed to receive visitors—even men, but their names must be submitted to their mistress, and the privileged swains must be of unblemished repute. It was in that way, during the Seven

Years' War, when the detested Prussian Drill-Sergeant Frederick was pushing forward and yet further forward in Moravia and was besieging Olmütz, that Charlotte made the acquaintance of Herr von Greiner, at that time a secretary in the Bohemian-Austrian Chancellerie. He was accepted as a suitor, but must wait till he could offer his wife a better position.

In spite of what her daughter says, Charlotte, unless her portraits wickedly malign her, was no beauty, and she was tocherless to boot; but she was clever and the favourite protégée of the Empress. What could not a capable man of business in the public service hope from such an alliance? We are told that, doubtless in view of this advantage, there had been many suitors for her hand, but the Empress had always stood in the way. Charlotte was in terror lest in this case also she should interfere. She was too useful to her mistress to be lightly spared. There was nothing for it but patience.

Meanwhile, in the year 1765, the Court moved to Innsbruck for the marriage of the second prince, afterwards the Emperor Leopold II., and there suddenly the Emperor Francis fell a victim to an apoplectic stroke. The Empress was stricken dumb with grief. She could not weep, but passed the night in spasmodic sobbing, till at last in the morning the doctors, who were alarmed at her condition, bled her, and then the merciful tears came and

brought relief. Charlotte was ordered to cut off all her mistress's hair, and in her dress, as well as in the furniture of her apartments, the widow put on the trappings of woe. Of the beauty that largely remained to her, since her husband was no longer there to see, she took no account. On every 18th of August, the day of his death, she remained shut up in her room, confessed, fasted, and passed the day in sad remembrances, in prayer and in pious exercises. If the stones of Windsor Castle could prate, they might tell just such a story.

Now that the lovely fair hair, that crown of glory, had been shorn off, and the Empress no longer cared for her old elaborate toilette, there was less for the favourite tirewoman to do, and the wedding with Herr von Greiner was allowed. The future bridegroom was presented to the great lady, who was surprised to find in him a rather commonplace man, and said afterwards to Charlotte: "I thought that you would have chosen some gallant gentleman—a Chevalier." However, the commonplace man was one in whom she later recognized a thoroughly honest and capable official, whom she respected and promoted for his worth.

The year of mourning for the dead Emperor was not yet at an end, and the Court had laid aside none of the trappings and the suits of woe. But Charlotte, as bride that was to be, was allowed to dress in colours. The wedding was celebrated with all the ceremonies which were at that time pre-

scribed by Court etiquette. It was still the fashion to make a special function of the betrothal, which in Charlotte's case was celebrated eight days before the marriage. On the wedding day she had to go and show herself in her bridal attire to the Empress, who added several presents of jewellery to what she was wearing, and lent her a priceless rope of pearls from the Imperial Treasury, to be returned after the ceremony, an ornament which was commonly used on such occasions.

The service was held in the private chapel, and the Mistress of the Robes led the bride to the altar. When the priest came to the place where the bride is told to answer "Yes," she was compelled by etiquette to curtesy to the Mistress of the Robes and ask her permission to do so. Then the Mistress of the Robes stood up, turned herself round to face the chapel in which the Empress was, and in her turn curtsied, and in dumb show asked Her Majesty's consent. This was also given by signs, and the Mistress of the Robes, in the same silent way, transmitted the pleasure of the Empress, who had taken upon herself the duties of mother, upon which the bride gratefully curtsied, turned to the priest and uttered the fateful "Yes."

There is something touching in the way in which the Empress mothered the orphan whom she had almost kidnapped from the Wolfenbüttel officers. She surely did not perform her duty by halves! When I read the account of the wedding

ceremony, my mind went back fifty-two years to another wedding, when in St. George's Chapel another Queen, recently widowed, sat in a little gallery and acknowledged the curtesy of her new daughter-in-law, one of the loveliest brides that ever sun shone upon. At every step in this sketch of the Austrian Empress we are met by something that speaks of our own great Queen.

In this wise was the wedding of one of the Imperial handmaidens celebrated in the days of Maria Theresia. Charlotte, now Frau von Greiner, entered happily upon her new life. The change from the excitement and publicity of the brilliant Austrian Court, to the quiet and narrower society of the upper middle-class, for whom the Imperial surroundings were a thing of awe and mystery, must have been very striking. But the bride found her account in it, and, as we shall see, Herr von Greiner, being a man of quite exceptional talent and artistic gifts, was able to attract to his house all that was most brilliant among the literary and musical celebrities of that time.

In the year 1769 Caroline—afterwards Frau Pichler—was born. In the meantime the Empress had by no means relaxed her friendship for her mother. The von Grieners were not "hoffähig," they could not go to court officially, but Frau von Greiner constantly visited her old mistress privately, and von Greiner himself had, as I have said, won the great lady's favour, and she not only kept

him in her eye for advancement, but frequently sent for him and sought his advice. With a salary of four thousand gulden—two hundred pounds, I suppose—and a spacious official residence, the family was well able to maintain a good appearance, and Herr von Greiner's exceptional attainments and artistic gifts as pastelist and poet made the house a trysting-place for all that was most notable in literature and music—especially music; for at Frau von Greiner's weekly assemblies were frequently seen and heard Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart, Paesiello and Cimarosa. Painters and sculptors, poets and authors less known to fame than those great musicians, were welcome visitors, and the *salon* became so popular that even a sprig of nobility—the condescension duly acknowledged—might now and then be found there. It is curious to see what a hard and fast line Vienna drew (and, to a certain extent, still draws) between the upper middle-class and the aristocracy—a line as deferentially recognized on the one side as it was haughtily imposed on the other. We know how to this day, in an Austrian ball-room, “die kleinen Komtessen” look with supercilious eyes upon any would-be partner who may be introduced to them unless his quarterings are fully satisfactory. The favour in which Frau von Greiner was held in high quarters had no doubt some effect in bridging over the gulf which was fixed between the noblesse and the bourgeoisie.

But I have been straying far away from the goal which I set before me. It would be fascinating to follow Frau Pichler's story, for it is the story of a woman who lived through stirring times, who was present during the three attacks upon Vienna, who tells us the one story of courteous chivalry of the young Napoleon; who heard Haydn, Weber, Mozart, Beethoven play their own compositions, and, living on till near the middle of the last century, could compare their execution with that of Liszt and Thalberg. She knew and rather disliked Madame de Staël, despising her for tricking out the charms of a woman "fair, fat and forty" in a too youthful attire; but was charmed by the music of a speaking voice, her description of which reminds us of Sarah Bernhardt. She corresponded at least once with Goethe, and was snubbed by the Humboldts, which rankled not a little. But all this is beside the mark. I am only concerned to show how to the end the lives of the two great Queen-Empresses followed similar lines.

Life is like a drawing in black and white, in which, of necessity, the black predominates. The stronger the drawing, the darker are the shadows; as in an etching by Rembrandt—the more powerful the life, the more violent the contrasts. The high lights were high indeed in the early days of the two august ladies; the deep gloom of the long night of widowhood, which in each case followed some twenty years of ideal home sunshine, must

have weighed all the more heavily for the glory of the mornings which had ushered in their young days; for true it is that "sorrow's crown of sorrow is the remembering happier things!" In facing the inevitable, women sometimes show higher courage than men. Nothing could be more brave than the way in which these two Queens bowed to the decrees of fate. The world's work must be done, though hearts be broken and the joy of life extinguished. They felt that they had duties to their people, and they braced themselves to harness. The death of the Prince Consort was really a far heavier blow to the Queen than that of the Emperor Francis was to Maria Theresa—or, rather, perhaps I should say a more searching blow, with much further-reaching consequences. The Queen lost not only a tenderly worshipped husband and lover, but a mainstay upon which she leant, an adviser in all matters of State, a guiding hand in trouble. Maria Theresa lost a husband whom, little as he deserved it, she loved with all her soul; a man who was all in all to her in her home life, but who in her public life was a mere cypher, playing no part in her queen-dom. It was, therefore, a braver act of devotion for our great lady in that loneliest of all solitudes, the solitude of a widowed queen, immediately to take up the threads of her complicated statecraft without the assistance of her loving helper, than it was for the Empress to remain as pilot, bereaved indeed, but no more unaided than she had always

been. Both laid aside their personal and poignant grief to devote themselves to their work. What remained to them of life—a cruel length of years: in the one case fifteen, in the other forty—was given without reserve to the promotion of the welfare of the fatherland. Duty was to them the supreme call, a voice that only became silent in death. Both are held in grateful and undying memory, but surely no women ever went to their rest with cleaner consciences or with better claim to be hailed as good and faithful servants.

CHAPTER VI

THE WALLACE COLLECTION

ONE day, as I was talking to a friend in my garden of memory, he, looking round at the fine bronzes by which we were surrounded, remarked what a pity it was that Oriental art should be so poorly represented in the Wallace Collection; and how much it was to be regretted that no specimens of the work of the great Eastern metal-workers and famous potters were to be found at Hertford House. As a matter of fact, cheek by jowl with the glories of the English, French, Spanish and Dutch art, there are only some half-dozen very poor specimens of Chinese cloisonné enamel, practically no pottery, none of the grand old Chinese bronzes, and not a single example of the work of such masters as the Japanese Miyōchin, Seimin, Tō-un, and others, **men as famous in their way as Benvenuto Cellini.** It is curious that three men so catholic in their tastes as the two Lords Hertford and Sir Richard Wallace should have paid no attention to the art of the Far East.

From the collections we naturally passed to discussing the men, and my friend began asking me

many questions about the great legacy, of which I am a trustee, eager to gather something of the truth out of the network of fable and falsehood by which it is surrounded. Here is what I told him. There is, of necessity, some guesswork, but guesswork not unsupported by a reasonable foundation of fact and probability. The strange jumble of truth and lies is but one more proof of the danger of throwing over all those conventionalities which are but so much ballast to keep straight the family ship. There are plenty of wreckers in the world, and they are never slack in their dirty work; but, above all, they love breaking up the big ships.

When the 'seventies were still young, I, being at the time still in the Diplomatic Service, but "*En disponibilité*," became a director of a foreign railway company, the business of which often took me to Paris, where our head offices were. One day, on the return journey to London—in 1872—I first met Sir Richard Wallace on board the steamer from Calais. The Duke of Sutherland, with whom I was travelling, knew him, and so we became acquainted—I little thinking that one day I should be brought into very intimate connection with the art treasures which he had inherited eighteen months earlier. Mr. Scott—afterwards Sir John—then a tall, slim, very pleasing youth, was with him as his secretary and confidential friend. Sir Richard was at that time a strikingly handsome man, about fifty-four years of age, with a very

attractive expression, greyish hair, shaved, like his patron, Lord Hertford, more or less in the fashion set by the Emperor of the French. We had a good deal of talk, and, later, I got to know him pretty well. When he was Member for Lisburn, he was appointed to the Committee of the House of Commons which sat under Mr. Baillie Cochrane, afterwards Lord Lamington, to consider the question of new buildings to be erected for the accommodation of the various Government departments. He used often to come and see me at the Office of Works, in order to study the different plans, and very warmly took up a scheme which I put forward, and which, if it had been adopted, would have saved the country a huge sum of money.

Unfortunately, Sir Stafford Northcote, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer, was afraid of submitting the first expense to the House of Commons. He never realized how complete was the trust which the House placed in him, and so my proposals fell through, to the great disappointment of Sir Richard Wallace, and to the vastly increased cost which the country has ultimately had to pay. There has seldom been a more flagrant case of penny wisdom and pound folly. The value of the land went up by leaps and bounds, and the patient tax-payer has suffered, as usual, without a murmur.

My proposal, briefly stated, was to build a chain of Public Offices between Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square, purchasing such land as did not



SIR RICHARD WALLACE, BART. K.C.B.

From a bust in the Wallace Collection

already belong to the State. Drummond's Bank was then pulled down, and Messrs. George and Edgar Drummond, as a favour to myself, very patriotically delayed rebuilding for six months, in order to give the Government time to consider the question. The Public Offices were at that time housed in a very haphazard manner, and it was evident that some comprehensive scheme must be initiated. My plan was generally approved, but it was not adopted owing to the costly timidity of Ministers.

Who and what was Sir Richard Wallace? That is a question which excited great interest forty-five years ago, an interest which has not altogether died out even now. That he was the private secretary and *âme damnée* of Lord Hertford everybody knew.

How he came to occupy that position, and what led his patron to alienate from his family in Sir Richard's favour so much of his great fortune as was in his power, together with the whole of the art treasures which he and his father and grandfather had collected during three-quarters of a century, at a time when beautiful things were to be had for what would now be considered an old song—that was a mystery to which no one had a clue, and which only now can be solved with absolute accuracy. Much that has been suggested is undoubtedly false, based upon conjecture without any

knowledge of such facts as have been brought to light.

Having been a trustee of the so-called Wallace Collections since the death of Lady Wallace in 1897, and having lived in great intimacy with Sir John Scott, who was her heir and had been so long the fidus Achates of Sir Richard, I have come to the conclusion that such evidence as exists and was known to Sir John, to Lord Esher and others, entirely disposes of the scandalous story that he was the illegitimate son of Lady Hertford, and therefore half-brother to Lord Hertford.

The true story, vouched for by people who were intimately acquainted with the scandals of the first half of the last century, is that Richard Lord Hertford, when a mere boy, had an intrigue with a Scotch girl of low birth—Agnes Wallace, afterwards Jackson. The result was Sir Richard Wallace. As the girl was older than himself, Lord Yarmouth, as he then was, had been rather the seduced than the seducer, and soon tired of the whole connection. He was quite willing to pay, but he had no mind to start in life saddled with the dead weight of an uneducated mistress and a natural son. Lady Hertford, however, got wind of the affair through Colonel Curwood, a brother officer and intimate friend of Lord Yarmouth. She took a fancy to the child, who responded with an affection that was almost filial. Lord Hertford, to whom his mother's slightest wish was law, took up the

boy at her bidding, and educated him until he grew up and became entirely indispensable. The lad was well known in Paris as "Monsieur Richard," Lord Hertford's shadow and agent, his representative at auctions and sales of works of art.

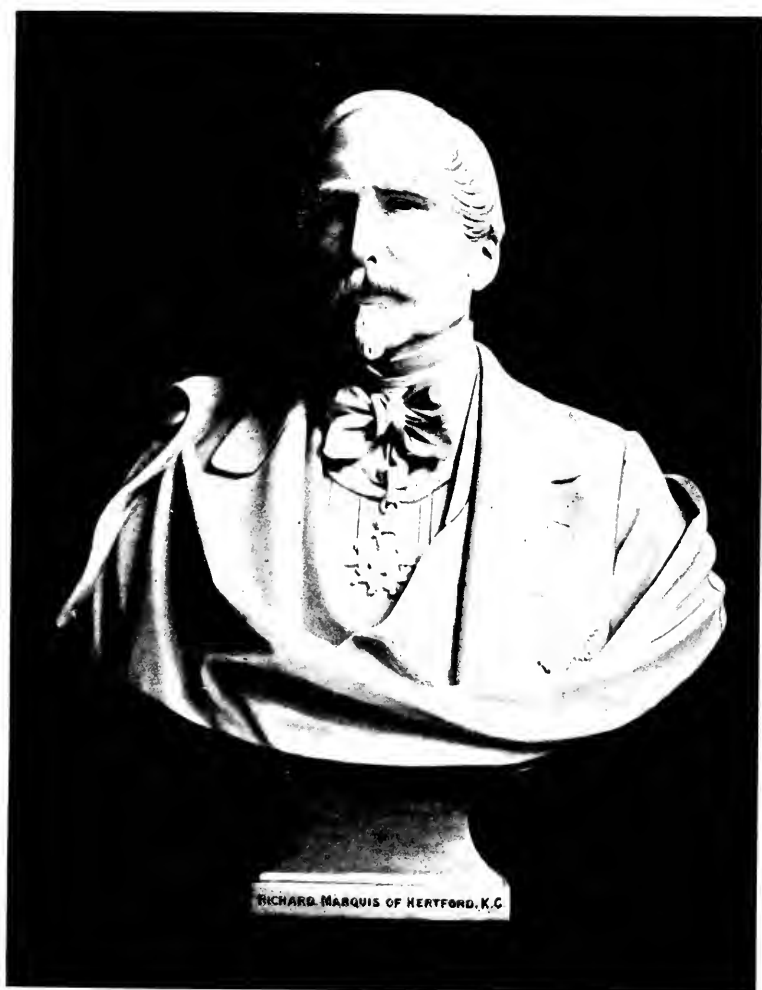
The name Richard seems to me to have some significance in confirmation of the above story. Is it likely that if the child had been Lady Hertford's, she should have chosen the name of her eldest legitimate and deeply-loved son, to bestow it upon an inconvenient accident? To me it seems utterly incredible. Moreover, would it not have been far more likely that she should have tried to smuggle away an unnecessary infant of her own than that she should have dragged the child into all the publicity of the home about which there had already been too much slanderous gossip? Again, Lady Hertford was a woman possessed of great wealth in her own right. Why, if Sir Richard was her son, did she leave the whole of her fortune to her second son, Lord Henry Seymour, and a mere trifle to the favourite to whom she was so kind a patroness? Obviously she relied upon Lord Hertford, as his father, to do everything for him. Not only the facts, but even the whole probabilities, are against the preposterous and malicious story that he was her son.

That the old lady was devotedly attached to Sir Richard and made a great pet of him, and that he returned her affection with interest, was a matter

of common knowledge. I have seen many letters of hers which attest the fact. When she travelled, he made all the arrangements for her, and took entire charge of her comfort, his bed being made outside her door when they slept at inns in the old posting days. He was her devoted slave, her most faithful watch-dog.

Upon his services as secretary, Lord Hertford, as I have said, placed entire reliance, but his office was not altogether a bed of roses. The great man, as a patron, was strict and sometimes severe. Sir Richard, with a taste for speculation on the Bourse, was sometimes in rather strait circumstances, out of which his patron helped him, not without reproof, to the tune of a good many thousand pounds. I have seen a document showing that Lord Hertford in 1854 paid twenty thousand pounds on this account through Messrs. Rothschild. There is in the Wallace Collection a certain engraved crystal tazza of Italian workmanship, a very lovely little gem. Sir Richard, in his poor days, picked it up for a few francs in an old sort of rag-and-bone shop in a street in the neighbourhood of the Temple. Some time afterwards, being rather hard up, he took it to Lord Hertford and asked him to buy it. "No," was the answer, "I won't have it. I will not encourage your extravagance; you must learn to be more economical."

Sir Richard sold the tazza to a dealer for two hundred and fifty francs, and a year or two later



RICHARD MARQUIS OF HERTFORD, K.G.

From a bust in the Wallace Collection

had the luck to buy it back, but he had to pay ten times the price and more. Often he had hard times enough, as he himself said when he told the story, but when Lord Hertford died in 1870 his day had come. The fortune which he inherited was in those days considered colossal. It would look less now compared with the huge riches of American plutocrats, but in 1870 these were yet in the making. Two very rich marriages, the second and third marquesses having both married heiresses, had, in addition to great landed estates, placed the Hertfords in an altogether exceptional position.

The way in which the third and fourth lords elected to spend their wealth had woven round them a whole tissue of legends, chiefly founded upon mere gossip. Virtuous and highly-respectable London delighted in crowning them with a halo of ill-fame, and when Lord Yarmouth, afterwards fourth Marquess, bought Bagatelle, it was declared to be the scene of orgies compared with which the mysteries of the Bona Dea were as innocent as nursery teas. Many of the stories were started by the rather second-class, or even demirep, English Society which was gathered together at Paris, jealous at being kept out from the intimacy of a very exclusive man.

These stories when repeated, we may be sure, lost nothing in the telling, and so Bagatelle came to be looked upon as a sort of Parc aux Cerfs, while Bishop Luscombe's congregation stalked with

virtuously uplifted noses along the Rue d'Aguesseau, thanking Heaven that they were not as Lord Hertford. Such a reputation, even if it were a mere scandalous libel, was hardly such as would commend itself to General Sir Francis Seymour, the proud patrician who was to succeed to the title as fifth Marquess. Indeed, it must have been gall and wormwood to a man trained as he had been for many years in the solemn dignity of the staid Victorian Court. There could be no sympathy, still less affection, between the cousins. But there was more than all this to influence Lord Hertford when he made his will, which left his successor practically nothing but the broad acres of Warwickshire, with a great costly palace to keep up, at a moment when land was falling in value every day and agriculture was drifting no man could tell whither.

Whatever shape Richard Lord Hertford's eccentricities may have taken, he had one redeeming virtue. He was a model son, and his love for his mother was the great passion of his life. To attack her, to be in any way wanting in respect for her, was in his eyes the one crime for which there was no forgiveness, and that was precisely the crime of which Sir Francis Seymour was guilty. It was a pity, to say the least of it, that the unkind things sure to be repeated, of which he was so prodigal in speaking of Lady Hertford, should ever have been uttered. However much he might disapprove of Lord Hertford's way of life, it would have been

wise to remember that a man is not responsible for his grandmother's indiscretions, and the shady parentage of Maria Fagnani might well have been allowed the benefit of silence. At any rate, it was not the business of Sir Francis to trumpet that or any other scandal about her.

Her story was curious. All the actors in the play have long been dead, but it is so intimately connected with the history of the Wallace Collection that, while there is no one left to whom its relation could give pain, it still retains a special interest. Anything that can throw light upon the passing of all those treasures into the possession of the nation is worth recording; and it is, moreover, an act of justice to clear the memory of a lady who has been somewhat roughly—and, as I believe, without foundation, handled in the "Dictionary of National Biography."

Under the blessing of the law, Maria was the daughter of the Marchese and Marchesa Fagnani, and the adopted child of George Selwyn. But the Marchesa, who was said to have been a ballet-dancer, must have been none too faithful to her husband; for, as a matter of fact, George Selwyn was said to dispute with the Duke of Queensberry, the wicked "old Q," the honour of being her father. As to that there seems to be no certain evidence, but one would have thought that such a rivalry, or partnership—whichever it might be—would have bred a jealousy between the two men. Not a bit

of it! They remained fast friends, were constantly together, and, when apart, wrote to one another in the most affectionate terms.

At George Selwyn's death in 1791 he left thirty-three thousand pounds to Maria and the rest of his fortune to "old Q." When the Duke, in his turn, came to an end of his stormy life, dying in the odour of iniquity in 1810, he bequeathed to Maria, who had married Lord Yarmouth in 1798, a fortune of between three and four hundred thousand pounds, together with the famous house opposite the Green Park in Piccadilly, in the window of which, when he was too old to walk, he used to sit ogling the pretty women as they passed below him. That window, with its leering old tenant, was one of the sights of London.

The Marchese Fagnani (Fagniani is a misspelling in all the English books) belonged to an old Milanese family. In the sixteenth century there was a poet of the name who gained some literary fame; others of the family were well-known lawyers, archæologists, mathematicians and churchmen in the seventeenth century—all men of good repute; and as Maria was undoubtedly born in holy wedlock, the *mésalliance* was not so very great.

In spite of this there must have been some doubt as to the desirability of alliance with the Fagnanis, for the marriage with Lord Yarmouth was a hole-and-corner affair, hustled through at Southampton on the 18th of May, 1798. Southampton was then

quite a small country town, very different from what it is now, just the sort of place where a marriage could be celebrated without fuss and in some secrecy. Indeed, when I remember it fifty years later it was still in its infancy and very primitive, with at least one delightful old house standing in its own grounds in the High Street above Bar. Altogether it was not the sort of wedding that certainly would have been arranged for the heir of the proud and royal Seymours had the magnates of the family not disapproved of the match. The French writers in newspapers, who made great capital out of the whole romance at the time of Lord Hertford's death in 1870, went out of their way to associate the Prince Regent with the Fagnani mystery. They hinted that the prince also claimed the paternity of Maria, and that he even attended the marriage. But that is an utter absurdity, for which there was no foundation. Immediately after the marriage Lord and Lady Yarmouth made their home in Piccadilly, next door to "Old Q," who did not die till twelve years later.

It is pretty clear that the marriage with Maria did not lower Lord Yarmouth's social position, otherwise Lord Castlereagh would hardly have chosen him as his second in his famous duel with Mr. Canning, for whom Mr. Charles Ellis, afterwards Lord Seaford, acted. Both men missed their first shots; in the second shot Mr. Canning was grazed in the leg. A duel between the Minister of

War and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was a matter of too great importance to be entrusted to a gentleman who was under a cloud. After Lord Yarmouth succeeded to the Marquisate in 1822, he received the Garter himself, and was sent by George the Fourth as special ambassador to carry the same order to the Emperor Nicholas in 1827.

At the time of her marriage the bride was no longer in her first youth; she was at least twenty-seven years old. For the correspondence between George Selwyn and the Duke of Queensberry shows that in 1772 she was already teething, and under the care of the former at Paris as his adopted child; and he was fretting himself into bad health lest the mother should take the little creature—Mie Mie, as she was called—away from him. The Duke, then Lord March, while abounding in good advice to his friend, promised his good offices, saying at the time that the Marchesa was sure to act in opposition to his (the Duke's) wishes and advice. The child was taken away by her mother for a time, but ultimately and permanently given back to her adoring guardian or father. From that time forth the noble Italian lady seems to have troubled herself about her baby no more.

As I have already said, there is no certainty as to Maria's parentage; indeed, the published letters leave the whole story in a state of confusion which

is perfect. Robinson, in his *Life of "Old Q"* (page 143), says:

"Jesse, who was privileged to go over Selwyn's correspondence, though refusing as a false affectation of delicacy to pass over in complete silence the mysterious reports respecting the true parentage of Selwyn's infantile charge, asserts that although references occur in the most private papers of Selwyn which unquestionably led to the supposition that either Lord March (Old Q) or Selwyn was, or, rather, that each severally believed himself to be, the father of the child, yet no certain proofs exist. Further, a letter addressed by Madame Fagnani to Selwyn, July 31st, 1772 (of which Jesse gives a translation), does not express any but the most polite feelings of friendship for the guardian of her child. Lest I may be misrepresented in alluding to a matter that a faithful record of established facts incident to my subject warrants, Madame Fagnani's letter is inserted in justice to all concerned:

" 'MY VERY DEAR AND RESPECTABLE FRIEND,

" 'I cannot find terms sufficiently expressive to thank you for all your kindness, and more particularly for the pains you take in regard to my daughter. I can assure you that nothing is more sensibly felt by me than the proofs of friendship which I have received from you on this occasion. The more I know the world, the more I perceive

the difficulty of finding a person who resembles you, and I consider myself the happiest of mortals solely from the happiness I have had in forming your acquaintance and obtaining your friendship.

“I am enchanted in learning that my daughter is in good health, though I fear she will suffer much in cutting her teeth. I venture to beg of you to continue to give me tidings of her, as without your kindness in writing to me from time to time, I should have been ignorant for the last three months of the fate of *ma petite*. My lord,* on his part, is a little indolent, but I forgive him this little fault on account of the many good qualities of his heart which he has to counterbalance it.

“I hope that your health is good. Pray present my compliments to Lord March, and tell him that I expect to hear from him. Preserve your friendship for me, and do not forget the most grateful and affectionate of all your friends, who makes it her duty and pleasure to be,

“Your very sincere servant and friend,

“‘COSTANZA FAGNANI.’”

Surely that is a letter which must have been written without any idea that it would ever be published, and it certainly gives no sunlight to clear away the clouds of the story. To add to the mystery of Maria's parentage, Roscoe, in his book on Selwyn, publishes two letters, one from Dr. War-

* Lord March, afterwards “Old Q.”

ner, the witty Chaplain to the British Embassy in Paris in 1780, when she was nine years old, in which, writing to Selwyn, he makes no disguise of his belief in the paternity of the Duke. The letter is also interesting as giving some slight idea of the impression which the child created:

“That freshness of complexion I should have great pleasure in beholding. It must add to her charms, and cannot diminish the character, sense and shrewdness which distinguish her physiognomy, and which she possesses in a great degree, with a happy engrafting of a high-bred foreign air upon an English stock. But how very pleasant to me was your honest and naïve confession of the joy your heart felt at hearing her admired. It is, indeed, most extraordinary that a certain person who has great taste (would he had as much nature)* should not see her with very different eyes from what he does. I can never forget that naïve expression of Madame de Sévigné: ‘Je ne sais comment l’on fait de ne pas aimer sa fille.’”

The other letter to which I allude is one from George Selwyn to Lord Carlisle, written at a time when complaining that he was “le jouet des autres,” and was being annoyed beyond all bearing by the way in which Madame Fagnani behaved to him about Maria, threatening to take her away from him altogether. In that letter he writes: “Hélas!

* The Duke of Queensberry.

rende mi figlia mis!" That may have meant no more than that the child was very dear to him, and need not necessarily imply that he believed himself to be her father. That he did so believe, however, is pretty certain. He educated her, placed her at school with Mrs. Terry at Campden House in Kensington, then a beautiful old house almost in the country, and having finally succeeded in getting rid of the mother's importunities, kept her with him until his death in 1791, introducing her into the best society. Gainsborough painted her portrait, as did Sir Joshua Reynolds, but the pictures no longer exist, or, at any rate, are lost.

Of the legal father, the Marquis Fagnani, we hear very little. The only notice I have found of him is in a letter from Selwyn to Lord Carlisle, dated June 19th, 1781:

"Belgiojoso told me last night that he had had letters from Milan, by which he was informed that the M. [Marquis] Fagnani was gone quite mad. He has been stone blind for a considerable time, and I take it for granted that both these misfortunes are come from the same cause—that is, mercury. His experiments to ease the one probably occasioned the other. I never hear one syllable from any of the family. I hope in God that I never shall, nor poor Mie Mie either. It grows every day less likely, and yet when I am out of spirits, that dragon, among others, comes across me and dis-

tresses me, and the thought of what must happen to that child if I am not alive to protect her."

George Selwyn was no further molested in the possession of the child. He lived for ten years after that letter was written, and by that time Maria had grown to woman's estate. She was twenty years of age, and had, under George Selwyn's will, a snug little fortune of her own, besides expectations, amply to be realized, of further benefits from the Duke of Queensberry. He doubtless took paternal care of the young lady who was to inherit all that he could alienate from the Douglas family. She became one of the greatest heiresses, if not the greatest, of her day.

In her youth Maria Fagnani must have been a very fascinating girl. To George Selwyn, as we have seen, she was as the apple of his eye. He simply adored her. If she had a cold in the head, or an infantile ailment, however trivial, it was torture to him, provoking sympathy from his correspondents, who themselves seemed to be quite under the spell of the delightful child; and as he apparently never destroyed a note, there are plenty of these condolences in the budget of letters published by Jesse. To have won the heart of Thackeray's Marquess of Steyne, if that fastidious personage ever possessed such an organ, was another feather in her cap, and in her old age we know how

tenderly her son and Richard Wallace both loved her.

In 1803 Lord and Lady Yarmouth were detained in France—he interned at Verdun—when war was again declared after the rupture of the Peace of Amiens, and their second son, Lord Henry Seymour, was born in Paris in 1805. Scandal declared that he was the son of Junot, Duc d'Abrantès, with whom Lady Yarmouth was very intimate. There is a note in Roscoe, page 8, which says: "She led a life of pleasure (1802-1807), travelling on the Continent with the Marshal Andoche." That was Junot's Christian name—but that he never was a marshal was his great grievance against Napoleon.

This Lord Henry is not to be confounded, as is commonly done, with the Lord Henry Seymour, son of the first Marquess, who lived at Norris Castle, near Cowes, and spent a fortune in building the famous sea-wall. The Lord Henry with whom we have to deal was a very eccentric personage. Unlike his brother, Richard Lord Hertford, who was a handsome man, and in his youth a dandy of the 10th Hussars, Lord Henry was singularly ugly, even grotesque. There was in the Rue Lafitte a sketch or caricature of him, which I have seen, in which he was represented as a sort of Quilp, stunted, misshapen, and of prodigious strength. He was a hero of the various Salles d'Armes, a famous fencer and athlete, and the founder, or, at any rate, one of the founders, of the French Jockey Club.

A kindly man withal, for by his will, in which his horses appeared as legatees—never to be crossed again—he left the bulk of his fortune to the hospitals of Paris. He died in 1859, three years after the loss of his mother. It used to be said that he never even set foot in England, but that was probably only one of the many fables set afloat about the two brothers. So curious a quartet as the mother, the two sons, and the enigma that was M. Richard, afterwards Sir Richard Wallace, furnished fine food for eavesdroppers and gossip-mongers.

For twenty-eight years after the death of his father in 1842, Richard Lord Hertford lived practically altogether in Paris, passing his time between the Rue Lafitte and Bagatelle, the little toy house on the outskirts of the Bois de Boulogne, which in 1780 was built by Bellanger in a few weeks at the order of the Comte d'Artois (Charles the Tenth), for a bet, in order to entertain Queen Marie Antoinette on a fixed day. The repetition in one of the rooms of the decoration of peacocks with spread tails in the boudoir of the Queen at Versailles was probably a delicate compliment—a little surprise—addressed to her on her visit. When I first saw it some fifteen years ago, although the house was empty and the famous statues had been removed and sold, it was still instinct with a certain eighteenth-century charm. The daintily laid-out grounds were still beautifully kept, and I should

hardly have been surprised had I suddenly come upon one of Fragonard's idylls, with shepherdesses powdered and hooped, and gentle shepherds to match, appropriately dressed in spotless pink and blue silk.

In that house, as in those idylls, there are tears when we remember how soon so many of those pretty, frivolous, powdered heads were to fall into the basket of Monsieur de Paris. Although the famous "Nelly O'Brien" of Sir Joshua, and perhaps Romney's "Perdita," were bought by the second Marquess, the foundation of the collection of art treasures which, since the militant ladies three or four years ago took to fighting pictures in the National Gallery have been stored away in the cellars of Hertford House, was laid by Francis, third Lord Hertford, who bought the glorious "Perseus and Andromeda" by Titian, which the keen eyes of Sir Claude Phillips rescued from a bath-room, where it had been stored away and forgotten, a number of the Dutch pictures and two of the Vandycks. But by far the greater part of it was acquired by his son Richard, the fourth Marquess.

Very important additions, especially in the armoury, were made by Sir Richard Wallace, who was himself a born collector, and had acquired no little experience, both on his own account, and as Lord Hertford's representative at the great auction sales of Paris. His taste in Oriental art was distinctly bad. He bought a few very inferior speci-

mens of Chinese cloisonné enamel, and two porcelain bowls of the Chia Ching reign, 1796-1821, a period when the art of China reached almost its lowest level, with very inferior mounts by some English bungler. Of these he was inordinately proud. There are two or three very fine céladon vases, with exquisitely chiselled French mounts, in one of the glass cases, but there is no evidence as to who bought them.

The reason of the fourth Lord Hertford's self-condemned exile in Paris, when he owned five palatial houses in London, besides Ragley, Sudbourne and other places, is not easy to ascertain. There was a story, firmly believed in my youth, and confirmed by Sir Richard Wallace to Sir John Scott, that his father tried to force him into a cruel marriage with the daughter of one of his mistresses, with whom he conspired to make it appear that Lord Yarmouth, as he then was, had compromised the girl. The young man deeply resented this outrage, and took refuge in Paris, where his mother was living. Certainly he had established himself there during his father's lifetime, for it was as Lord Yarmouth that he bought Bagatelle in 1830, and he did not succeed to the marquise until twelve years later.

Yriarte's story that he left London on account of a quarrel with the parish over the rates of his house in Piccadilly, is hardly to be accepted. It is far more likely that he left England in order to free

himself from his father, for whom he had no love or respect, and made Paris his home that he might be with his mother, whom he adored. She, with Lord Henry Seymour and Monsieur Richard, lived at No. 1, Rue Faitbout, Lord Hertford's headquarters being hard by at No. 2, Rue Lafitte. There he lived the life of an invalid and sybarite, hardly to be called happy in spite of his great possessions—a recluse, the darkness of whose hypochondria was only cheered by his correspondence with Mr. S. Mawson, who was his agent in London for the purchase, restoration and care of pictures, or by some brilliant triumph at Christie's or in the Paris auction-rooms.

Few people saw him, and still fewer knew him. And yet he had all the qualifications which would have enabled him to shine among his fellows. Yriarte said of him: "Causeur célèbre, très spirituel, très lettré, d'une politesse accomplie, d'un raffinement rare, ses goûts personnels l'éloignaient cependant de la société, et il a vécu toute sa vie dans un milieu inférieur. Il y apportait même avec ses intimes une manière d'être dissimulée, peu conforme avec le cant anglais, et il affichait une sorte de cynisme que les deux ou trois amis intimes qu'il a conservés jusqu'à sa mort regardaient comme son masque d'emprunt." His wit, if sometimes a little cynical, or even a little risky, was undeniable, and what are called "good stories" of him were the joy of clubs.

That he suffered acutely there can be no doubt, for Sir Richard Wallace once told me that he went with him to Contrexéville—we know what that means—which fifty years ago was a very different place from what it is now, and where all the sordid features of life at that time must have been torture to a man of his exquisite refinement. With public life he had no concern. As a young man he was for a few years in the House of Commons, and on succeeding to the title, he delivered a maiden speech in the House of Lords, and that was all. His one and only participation in affairs was in 1855, when he consented to act as one of the jury at the Exhibition of Paris.

Upon this subject he wrote a characteristic letter to Mawson:

“Only think of my being at the Champs-Élysées every morning at nine o’clock. Hard work for an old fellow who has very different habits. I am obliged to get up every morning between six and seven o’clock to be at the exhibition in proper time to preside over a group composed of four classes. I remain there almost all day doing my work, and as I am not accustomed to this sudden activity, I am very tired, and, in consequence, neglect my own affairs.”

It was, of course, his intimacy with Louis Napoléon which caused him to accept such a violent break in his habits, but he owed the Emperor some

gratitude, for it was by his friendly help that he was enabled to add to the grounds of Bagatelle, and again to employ Dasson to copy the famous bureau in the Louvre. Apropos to Bagatelle, Mr. MacColl, in his introduction to the catalogue of pictures at Hertford House, to which I owe great obligation, has a good story. It is said "that two acquaintances asked leave to fight a duel in the grounds. The Marquess politely replied that he had not the slightest objection to their shooting one another, but could not trust their skill so far as to risk his statues." Perhaps most people would have endorsed his view of the comparative value of masterpieces by Pigalle, Lemoyne and Houdon, and the lives or limbs of the would-be Bobadils. Hardly could they be worth Houdon's famous "Baigneuse."

Lord Hertford's letters to Mawson, which were sold to the trustees by Mr. Mawson's daughter, show how keenly he watched the great sales both in London and Paris. The English sales he, of course, very rarely attended, and when he did so, it was Mawson who did the bidding, guided by a code of signals given by motions of Lord Hertford's hat. Nor was he personally more active if he was present at a French sale; he seems to have carried his dislike of all publicity into every phase of life, and to have conducted all his business by agents.

The correspondence with Mawson, of which many extracts are given by Mr. MacColl in his

catalogue of the pictures is interesting, not only as showing Lord Hertford's great personal interest in art and the extraordinary difference in prices between now and then, but also as revealing at least one charming side in a character which, owing to its eccentricity, was, I honestly believe, cruelly maligned. No mere selfish voluptuary, such as Lord Hertford was described by the evil tongues of those who did not know him, could have inspired the affection which was felt for him by those who did. Sir Richard Wallace more than once spoke to me of him in terms of the strongest respect and affection, and, on the other hand, his gratitude to Sir Richard is expressed with pathetic feeling in his codicil to his will of June 7th, 1850: "To reward as much as I can Richard Wallace for all his care and attention to my dear mother, and likewise for his devotedness to me during a long and painful illness I had in Paris in 1840, and on all other occasions, I give such residue to the said Richard Wallace now living at the Hôtel des Bains, Boulogne-sur-Mer, in France, and whose domicile previous to the Revolution of 1848 was in my mother's house, Rue Taitbout No. 3, formerly No. 1, absolutely."

The man who wrote those words had a heart. The letters to Mawson are often worded as if he—Mawson—were conferring the most signal favours upon his employer. The most formal commissions of the earlier days of their connection soon grew

to be letters of absolute affectionate gratitude. Lord Hertford had the most complete confidence in the judgment, taste and good faith of his agent. Well might he trust him, for Aladdin was not more faithfully served by the slaves of the ring and the lamp. But it is only a kindly nature and sweet disposition which is capable of dealing with a subordinate without the slightest tinge of patronizing condescension. Two or three examples will suffice to show the nature of the intimacy between the employer and the employed.

The Duke of Buckingham's sale at Stowe, in 1848, created an immense sensation. I remember it well, for although I was only eleven years old, I used to hear much art talk even in those days between my father and his friends. It is the subject of a characteristic letter from Lord Hertford to Mawson, quoted by Mr. MacColl, dated September 10th, 1848; it was written from Boulogne:

"I intended being at Stowe on the fifteenth, but I find that it is not certain whether I shall be able to attend the sale on that day. I think we must have the 'Unmerciful Servant,' by Rembrandt, and hope the price will not be as unmerciful as the subject; but you know that I place all confidence in you, and depend upon your kindness on this occasion.

"The Rembrandt and the Domenichino are my favourites, and I depend upon you for doing the

best. Pray have the kindness not to mention to anybody that you buy on my account. I am very anxious my name should not appear. In the event of my being in time for the sale, you would see me there, and my hat would play the same part it has already acted in similar circumstances."

On September 24th, Lord Hertford wrote to thank Mr. Mawson for the transaction, adding:

"I hope and trust we have not paid our pictures much too dear. I am very glad you like them, as I have a very high opinion of your judgment."

The great Rembrandt was bought for two thousand three hundred pounds. What would it fetch to-day?

In July, 1855, the contents of St. Dunstan's, in the Regent's Park, were sold, and were the subject of the enclosed letters:

"Rue Lafitte, Paris.

"July 5th, 1855.

"There are a few things I should like to have at the sale of my father's villa in the Regent's Park on the 9th inst."

"Paris, July 6th, 1855.

"In anticipation that you will have the kindness to attend the sale at the Regent's Park for me, and having no time to spare, I send you the list of things

I wish to have, and that I hope you will have the kindness to buy for me:

“PICTURES.

“118. P. Veronese—Not more than £40 or £50.

“120. Ruysdael—What you think it is worth and a little more.

“122. Northcote—‘Portrait of George IV. when Prince of Wales.’ I am anxious to have it.”

“Paris, July 20th, 1855.

“I am extremely obliged to you for having had the kindness to buy my ‘caprices’ at the Regent’s Park sale. You did it all beautifully and just what I wished. I depend on your usual kindness for having the ‘Prince of Wales’ portrait repaired for me. I rather regret the landscape (*i.e.*, the Ruysdael), though an indifferent picture, because it was in my room when I was a boy a few years ago. What prices people give now for all these old affairs! It is ridiculous!”

Only once does Lord Hertford sound a note of disquiet at the price paid by his commissioner, and that was for the famous portrait by Velasquez of “Don Baltasar Carlos in Infancy,” which fetched £1,680 at the Louis Philippe sale at Christie’s in May, 1853. He writes:

“As for the Velasquez, I do not remember it at all, *ainsi je ne puis rien dire*. What frightens me

is that it appears never to have struck me at the Louvre, as I do not remember it at all. You gave a *prodigious* price for it, but as I have great confidence in your taste and judgment, as well as in everything else, I dare say I shall like it, and I long to have a look at it, which I hope soon to be able to do."

It was certainly not a bad investment at the *prodigious* price.

Other letters are full of the most flattering expressions:

"April 11th, 1856.

"I have only a moment to thank you a thousand times for your great kindness in giving me some details of the Sibthorpe sale."

"April 23rd, 1856.

"A thousand thanks for your kindness."

But these expressions are too numerous to quote; still, I will give one more because it really testifies to something like friendship.

Writing from Paris, December 11th, 1863, Lord Hertford says:

"I was in hopes that I should have had the pleasure of seeing you in Brussels something like a couple of months ago. There was a goodish portrait by Rubens that I bought. I shall be delighted to show it you some day, and I hope you will like it."

Certainly Lord Hertford was a great gentleman, one whom it must have been a pleasure to serve.

It is easy to imagine the *saeva indignatio* of Lord Hertford if he could come to life again and see "the prices which people give now for these old affairs." Money could hardly have been better invested than it was by himself, his father and his grandfather, when they paid what were deemed wild sums for their works of art. Fancy Sir Joshua's "Nellie O'Brien" being bought by the second Marquess for £64 1s. at the Caleb Whitefoord sale. Think of the third Marquess buying Vandyck's "Young Italian Nobleman," a glorious portrait of the Genoese period, for £409 10s. In the second half of the nineteenth century prices went up madly, but, even so, Lord Hertford, when he gave £1,795 10s. for "Mrs. Carnac," was purchasing gold for silver. Why, the first state of the mezzotint engraving of that picture by J. R. Smith was sold a few years ago, if I remember aright, for eleven hundred guineas. For the "Strawberry Girl" the price paid at the Rogers sale was £2,205. "No man," said Sir Joshua, "could ever produce more than half a dozen original works, and that is one of mine."

Lord Hertford was delighted with the acquisition. He wrote to Mawson:

"You have done admirably, and I return you most sincere thanks for your kindness. The 'Straw-

berry' is dear. I should be sorry to have a large basket at *that* price; but it seems it is beautiful, and in this affair, as in others, I have completely followed your good advice, and you have added to my collection pictures I have never seen, which shows, more than words can express, the great and friendly confidence I have in you. I am sure I shall be delighted with what you have acquired. I am very sorry your honourable name was not coupled with our 'Girl' when she was knocked down. It is not fair that you should not enjoy the little glory of having secured in a gallant manner the gem of this interesting sale, so you are at full liberty to use my name with yours respecting this painting. Was it not an immense price? I don't regret it at all; on the contrary, I am delighted to have so fine a Sir Joshua, as I am extremely fond of them, and they cannot always be had when wanted."

Another notable picture bought at the Rogers sale was the "Don Baltasar Carlos in the Riding School," by Velasquez, for which Mawson paid £1,210 1s. A wonderful bargain at the Stowe sale was Murillo's "Assumption of the Virgin," knocked down for £58 16s.

I have no space to go into details, but we can form some idea of the value of these purchases when we see that Lord Hertford bought five of the very finest Sir Joshua's for £7,974 5s. The six finest

Rembrandt's cost him £5,453 15s.; five of the best Watteaus, £2,037. What superb investments—to speak of no others!

It is something of an anti-climax to find Lord Hertford giving £4,000, and Sir Richard Wallace £2,400, for works by Ary Scheffer. Well might Lord Hertford write to Mawson in 1853: "You know, fancy has a great deal to do with pictures as with everything else." £1,680—a *prodigious* price" for a Velasquez! £4,000—given without hesitation for a picture by that most namby-pamby of artists, Ary Scheffer!

The desire to surround himself with beautiful works of art was one of the crimes laid to the charge of Lord Hertford. He was extravagant, he was selfish. As to the first of these accusations, the prices which he paid were surely no more than what was permissible to a man with an income of nearly a quarter of a million sterling; and, as I have shown, from the mere investor's point of view the money was well laid out. As for the cry of selfishness, what could be more natural than that a man endowed with the most refined taste and judgment, debarred by health no less than by inclination, from the more active relaxations in which rich men find pleasure—the turf, sport of all kinds, hunting, and, of late years certainly, shooting, should be captivated by the excitement of the auction-rooms. It was in them that he found the pleasures of the chase. He was deprived of much,

and it were scurvy treatment to reproach him for what harmed no living being at the time, but has ended by giving joy to millions of his countrymen. The amusement with which he solaced long days and years of physical pain, aching under a complaint which notoriously affects the spirits perhaps more than any other, has borne fruit for which we should be grateful, even though it be only indirectly that we owe it to him. He might fairly have written in his will like Bacon: "For my name and memory, I leave it to men's charitable speeches and to foreign nations, and to the next age." We are "the next age"; it behoves us to be not only just but generous. To our shame we have been neither.

There can be very few men now alive who knew Richard Lord Hertford personally. From Lord Esher, who as a youth did know him, I have a letter, which he very kindly allows me to quote, giving more than one of those little intimate touches which lend a spice to narration. But it does more than that. It furnishes direct evidence of the truth of what I have written about the calumnies by which Lord Hertford's character was poisoned by people for whom his chief crime was that he did not choose to know them. Is it likely, is it even possible, that two ladies in a high position like Lord Esher's grandmother and mother should have visited him in the Rue Lafitte and in the much-talked-of Bagatelle had those vile slanders been

true? The story of Sir Richard Wallace's birth and upbringing is conclusive.

Let the letter speak for itself.

"Roman Camp,

"Callander.

"March 17th, 1916.

"MY DEAR REDESDALE:

"I remember being taken, by my grandmother, to tea with Richard Marquis of Hertford. He lived at the corner of the Rue Lafitte, and his fine rooms were crowded with objets d'art—although not smothered in *clocks*, as they afterwards became when Wallace and Scott occupied them. Everything was most sumptuous, but I recollect perfectly that when the tea was brought in by a very solemn major-domo, whose long grey whiskers I can see to this day, Lord Hertford went to a beautiful Louis XVI. secrétaire, which he unlocked, and brought out the sugar-basin, which he carefully put away again after tea. (Lord Hertford was a very handsome man, but frail and delicate.) Not long afterwards my mother and I were invited to spend an afternoon at Bagatelle, where Richard Wallace entertained us, as Lord Hertford was engaged—so he sent word—in Paris. The gardens were beautiful—as they still are—but the house was not so full as the Rue Lafitte.

"My grandfather, Colonel Gurwood, who had served through the Peninsula War in the Light

Division, was given a captaincy in the 10th Hussars in 1814, and Richard Seymour joined the regiment when he was seventeen years old and ten years' junior to my grandfather, who became much attached to him. This friendship lasted through life.

"I possess three volumes of bound letters to Colonel Gurwood from Lord Yarmouth, by which name Lord Hertford was known from 1822 to 1842, when he succeeded his father, Francis, the third Marquess of Steyne of 'Vanity Fair.'

"These letters are interesting, as they contain many references to the collection of bric-à-brac which Lord Yarmouth and Wallace, his secretary, had already commenced to form. Many fine things which belonged to my grandfather, and are now the property of my sister, were purchased by Lord Yarmouth and Wallace or by their advice. In return, my grandfather always bought for Lord Yarmouth his riding and driving horses. He used to send them to Paris, where Lord Yarmouth lived with his mother, Lady Hertford, Maria Fagnani.

"Many times have I heard my grandmother and my mother tell the story of Sir Richard Wallace's adoption by Lord Hertford. Wallace was the son of Lord Yarmouth by a girl, Agnes Jackson by name, who was a kind of *filles du régiment* of the 10th hussars, and young Seymour made a home for her in Paris while the liaison lasted. There Wallace was born, and when Seymour parted from his

mistress, the child was placed with a concierge in the Rue de Clichy, where he ran wild under a *porte cochère* until he was about six years old.

"My grandfather, who had known Agnes Jackson and all about her short-lived liaison with Lord Yarmouth, hunted up the boy, and finding he was a smart child, showed him to Lady Hertford, Maria Fagnani, and induced her to bring him up, much against the inclination of her son.

"There is not, and never was, the slightest foundation for the absurd legend that Maria Fagnani was Sir Richard Wallace's mother, although the writer in the 'Dictionary of National Biography,' who cannot possibly know anything of the facts, adopts it.

"One of the reasons sometimes given for assuming that Lord Hertford could not be Wallace's father was that there was not more than eighteen or nineteen years between their ages. On the other hand, it was overlooked that Maria Fagnani was very nearly, if not quite, fifty years of age when Wallace was born. Anyway, I have no doubt whatever that the facts are as I have stated them.

"They were corroborated, as far as I am concerned, by the evidence of Madame O—— de B——, a lady who for forty years lived on the *deuxième étage* of the Rue Lafitte and in a beautiful villa, called St. James, close to Bagatelle.

"She was a lady of irreproachable life, and virtue as stern as that of Madame de Maintenon, whom

she resembled in many ways. I inherited some of the gifts which she had received from Lord Hertford; among them a fine 'Garter George,' which belonged to Prince Charles Edward, and was acquired by Francis, third Marquis, from the collection of Cardinal York.

"It was destined for my grandfather and his children, and Madame O—— fulfilled her obligation.

"I perfectly remember Sir Richard Wallace's son, whose liaison with a French girl bitterly offended Sir Richard, although, as he was told by the young man when the quarrel was irremediable, he had only followed his father's example.

"Young Wallace came once or twice to London after 1870. He died of typhoid fever when still a young man. But Wallace would never recognize his son's children or their mother; the former were amply provided for by Lady Wallace. Madame O—— de B—— had no children of her own, but she showed great kindness to her connections *de la main gauche*. I perfectly remember the advent of Sir John Scott into the Wallace household, and the subsequent course of a lifelong devotion to the interests of his employers that deserved and obtained its reward.

"There is no need to enter into the story of Lady Wallace, a very refined, shy and excellent lady, although the facts were well known to my family.

"My French relations were intimate with Lord

Hertford, Sir Richard Wallace and Sir John Scott, over a period extending from 1817 to Scott's death.

"Yours ever,

"ESHER."

In a further letter to me Lord Esher very justly calls attention to the remarkable likeness between Lord Hertford and Sir Richard Wallace. The busts at Hertford House demonstrate this.

Richard, fourth Marquess of Hertford, who never married, died at Paris on the 25th of August, 1870. His successor in the title, Sir Francis (or, as his familiars called him, "Franco") Seymour, as was natural, hurried over to Paris, not yet beleaguered by the Prussians, to look after his interests. He was accompanied by his eldest son and his solicitor. The fortune at stake in lands and money was great, but, if the value of the works of art be taken into account, enormous even in these days of plutocratic dominion. The real estate and the personalty, taken together, would have reached a sum "beyond the dreams of avarice;" indeed, by comparison, the boilers and vats of Mr. Thrale would have represented no more than a modest competence.*

It must have been a rude shock for the new Lord Hertford when the will was read at Bagatelle after the funeral, and he found that, barring the settled

* Mr. Thrale's profits from the brewery were estimated at £30,000 a year.

estates, which without the money were almost a white elephant, there was nothing for him. The wealth which had given his two predecessors such power that, in spite of manifest drawbacks, they were propitiated with the Garter, had vanished like Alnaschar's dream, and he was left with the unredeemed anxieties and responsibilities of a country squire. Equally, it must have been a startling shock for Sir Richard to find that he was the heir to all that wealth.

With the exception of a handsome property which Lord Hertford bequeathed to his cousin, Sir Hamilton Seymour, the famous ex-Ambassador, or rather Minister, to Russia, practically everything was left to the future Sir Richard Wallace.

Sir Richard (I call him "Sir" for convenience' sake, though he was not created a baronet until the following year) lost no time in turning his newly-acquired wealth to good account. He was one of the most generous men that ever lived. Bravely he stood by Paris and the French in their troubles, started ambulances, founded the Hertford Hospital for poor Englishmen, and set money flowing like water in aid of all sufferers by the war. His charities in France were boundless, and continued throughout his life, and indeed beyond it. But he felt it his duty to come to England, and for thirteen years represented Lisburn in Parliament—Lisburn, which he made the headquarters of his vast Irish domain.

In recognition of the great services which he had rendered to the English in Paris during the siege he was created a baronet in 1871, when he married a French lady, Mademoiselle Castelnau, with whom he had lived for many years, and by whom he had one son who was an officer in the French Army. That son, now long since dead, was the great sorrow of Sir Richard's life. The breach between them was irreparable, and it made the father miserable. He told a friend of mine, an Italian gentleman, who was breakfasting with him one day and found him in a state of utter dejection, how it irked him that people should look upon him as one of the happiest of men, when in truth he was the most wretched. The sympathy of a good son was the solitary thing wanting, and that he never had.

One friend he had in Mr. Scott, afterwards Sir John, who became his private secretary, and whose affection stood to him almost in lieu of that a son. Sir John's father was a distinguished physician, a great personal friend of Sir Richard's. One day this gentleman's father-in-law, Mr. Murray, was calling upon him, shortly after his inheritance of Lord Hertford's possessions, and he happened to say that he was badly in need of a private secretary, and did not know whom to choose. The post would require some unusual qualifications—amongst others, a perfect knowledge of French. Mr. Murray said that perhaps his grandson, a very young barrister just called, might fulfil the conditions. Sir

Richard jumped at the offer, and the young man was sent to be looked at. The result was that he found favour in Sir Richard's eyes, and, after probation, was appointed. No happier choice could have been made, no more devoted and faithful friend could have been found; he remained with Sir Richard until his death at Paris in 1890, and continued to keep watch over Lady Wallace until her end came seven years later.

The nation hardly knows how much it owes to the chivalrous self-effacement of Sir John Scott. When Lady Wallace, to whom Sir Richard had left everything, was about to make her will, she was anxious to bequeath her whole property to Sir John in gratitude for the devotion with which he had managed her affairs and cared for her interests. Sir John persuaded her that it would be a good thing if she were, at any rate, to leave the contents of Hertford House to the nation, and, moreover, that if he were to inherit the entire fortune, there might be some suspicion of undue influence. If, on the other hand, she gave her chief art treasures to England, her memory would be venerated as perhaps the country's greatest benefactress, while he could gratefully and honourably accept whatever else she might be pleased to bequeath to him. The lady followed his advice. He was a large-minded and generous man, and though, as it turned out, he became the heir to a great fortune, it must never be forgotten that he might have inherited property

worth at that time, according to the late Mr. Charles Davis's computation, at least seven millions sterling, and now, in view of the amazing rise in the value of all works of art, perhaps as much more. It was a most courageous and loyal piece of self-sacrifice. One day, when I said to a man who was inclined to scoff, his answer was: "Yes, but look at the Death Duties that he would have had to pay." He could have met those by the sale of half a dozen pictures. Nothing, to my mind, can detract from the patriotic wisdom and generosity of Sir John's conduct.

When the greatest collection of art treasures that ever was in any private hands became the property of the nation, the next question was of how and where to house it. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time, and he appointed a Committee, of which he asked me to be a member, to consider the matter. Lord Lansdowne was our chairman, and, after careful discussion, we came to the conclusion that the best plan to adopt would be, if possible, to purchase the freehold of Hertford House from the Portman Estate, and house the collection in its old home, turning the bedrooms on the first floor and the stables into galleries.

There was an idea favoured by Sir Edward Poynter that it would be wise to separate some of the pictures—the Spanish paintings, for example—and place them in the National Gallery; but that

scheme would have been against the provisions of the will, which insisted upon nothing being taken from, and nothing added to, the collection as it stood, so the proposal could not be entertained. Sir Edward would have wished the whole collection placed in a building to be erected adjoining the National Gallery; this was also overruled.

Upon this subject Lord Esher writes:

“The Committee to which you allude was appointed under a Treasury Minute of the 3rd of May, 1897.

“The opponents of the Hertford House scheme, headed by Sir Edward Poynter, made a very determined resistance. Lord Chilton was First Commissioner of Works, and I, as you know, occupied the post which you had filled with so much distinction and permanent advantage to the nation.

“We, who were fighting for the retention of Hertford House, owe a heavy debt of gratitude to King Edward, then Prince of Wales, who, with unerring instinct in such matters, grasped at once the historical and æsthetic advantages of keeping the collections intact and *in situ*.

“We were also largely indebted to Sir Francis Mowatt, then Secretary to the Treasury, who afforded us unfailing and generous support.

“The purchase of the leasehold and freehold interest in the house cost £74,620.

"The structural alterations about £28,000, and electric light, heating and painting, £259 16s.

"In August, 1898, at your instance, I took the decorative work, to a very great extent, out of the hands of the Office of Works' contractor. I remember that the paper used in the large picture gallery, the selection of which had given us a great deal of trouble, was copied from a piece of Italian silk which we borrowed from Bertram, who lived in Dean Street, Soho. Alfred Rothschild then, as always, took a deep interest in Hertford House, and his advice was invaluable to us all."

A Board of Trustees was then appointed, consisting of Lord Rosebery, as chairman, who gave way to Sir John Scott, Sir Edward Malet, Sir John Stirling Maxwell, Sir Arthur Ellis, Mr. Alfred de Rothschild and myself. Mr.—now Sir—Claude Phillips, that distinguished connoisseur and critic, was appointed keeper. The Office of Works constructed the new Galleries according to our plan, and a Committee of the Trustees undertook the arrangement of the collection. Sir John Scott, Mr. Alfred de Rothschild and myself, with Sir Claude Phillips, worked day after day for many months, evolving kosmos out of a chaos of packing-cases. It was a huge task, but when the Galleries were finally thrown open, we were rewarded by a chorus of approbation, and the praise of foreign critics was no less loud than that of our own friends. Our

leading idea was, as far as possible, to avoid the museum aspect, and to show the pictures, clocks, furniture, porcelain, etc., as the collection of a great connoisseur set out as if he were still living in the house. The trustees were fortunate in securing the generous co-operation of Sir Guy Laking in the arrangement and cataloguing of the armour. It may readily be believed that it was no small sorrow to us when, owing to the war, all our work had to be undone in order to stow away our treasures in safety. I, for one, can hardly expect to live to see the reawakening of the old glory. I can only hope that when that time comes something of the former order may be restored.

One morning—it was the 17th of January, 1912—I received an urgent message by telephone, begging me to go to Hertford House at once. Sir John Scott had died there suddenly. When I reached Manchester Square, I found him lying in the Trustees' room. He had been discussing business with Mr. MacColl, who had succeeded Sir Claude Phillips as keeper, when all of a sudden he began to have a difficulty in breathing. He said it was nothing, but he grew worse. Doctors were sent for, but there was nothing to be done. That large-hearted man died in the house where he had lived so long, and surrounded by all the beautiful things which he loved and which he had been the means of securing for the nation when he might have had

them for himself. The Government had made him a baronet. Lord Rosebery, with a keen appreciation of what he had done, said to me in righteous jest: "They have made him a baronet when they ought to have made him a duke."

CHAPTER VII

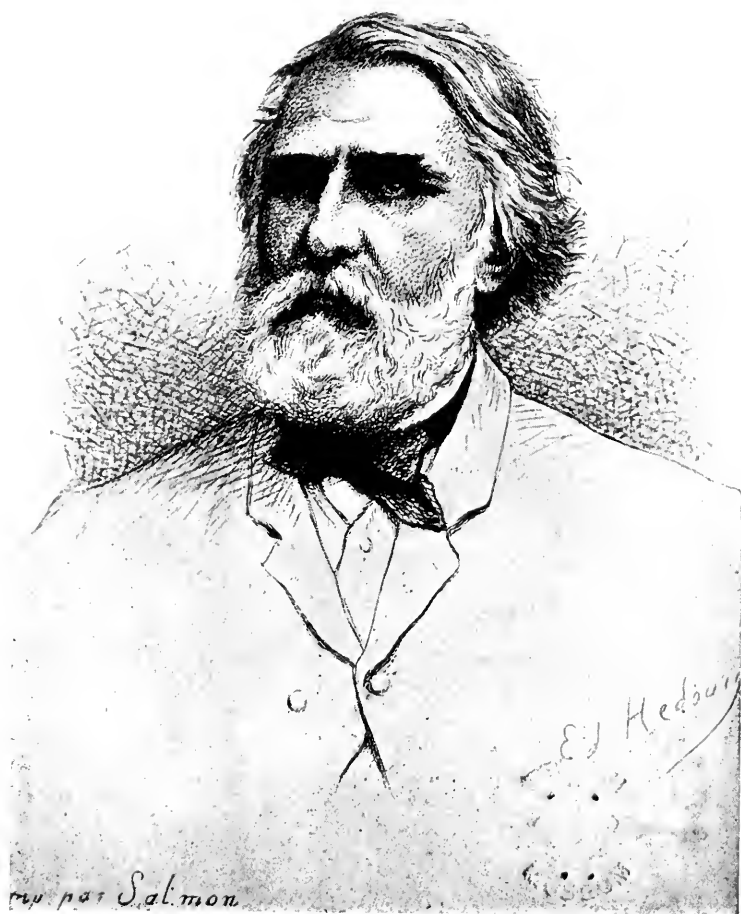
A NOTE ON RUSSIAN STUDIES

A FEW days ago—I am writing on the 7th of August, 1916—I read in the *Times* a long speech by one of our preterpluperfect rulers, in which was announced the determination of the Government to encourage the study of Russian, on account of its glorious literature. I think the adjective was “glorious,” but, at any rate, it was some such word. Was there ever a better example of the danger of giving reasons? Had this illustrious gentleman deigned to glance at some such easily accessible book as Mr. Maurice Baring’s delightful little “Outline of Russian Literature,” he would have been saved from talking such nonsense.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century literature in Russia was like the snakes in Iceland. Nor can it be said that the new development which took place early in that century was a *rinascimento* such as spring into being in Italy, in France and in England. A new birth implies a previous state of existence, and it cannot be said that the old chronicles which the dryasdusts of Kiev—the old headquarters of such monkish learning as existed—still

less a few embryonic attempts at versification and dramatic writing, could be dignified by the inspiring title of literature. "The Russian language"—to quote Mr. Baring—"was, as has been said, like an instrument waiting for a great player to play on it, and to make use of all its possibilities." The fables of Kryloff—a playwright whose dramas have long since been forgotten—were published in 1806, and these remain a classic. Out of the two hundred fables which he left at his death in 1844, forty were translations, or, rather, "recreations," as Mr. Baring puts it, of La Fontaine; seven were suggested by Aesop; the remainder were original. As in all fables, these contain an element of satire; that here and there the satire should be tinged with even a spice of political acidity did not hinder their popularity. I should like to say in passing, that the few pages which Mr. Baring devotes to his account of Krylov contain passages of great beauty—passages which could only have been written by a man gifted with the keenest appreciation of the poetry which is part of himself.

It was in 1816, that with Karamzin's monumental work, "The Chronicles of Russia," the literature of that country burst into existence, like Pallas Athene fully armed from the head of Zeus. "Not only were the undreamed-of riches of the Russian language revealed to the Russians in the style, but the subject matter came as a surprise." Pushkin, the greatest Russian poet that ever lived,



IVAN TURGENIEV

From an etching by E. Hedouin

or probably ever will live, was the next great star that appeared upon the firmament, and he declared that Karamzin had revealed Russia to the Russians, just as Columbus discovered America. To Karamzin's glorious prose and to Pushkin's immortal verse belong the first honours in the *belles-lettres* of Russia.

Fifty years and more have passed since I read Gogol's "Dead Souls" in the original. The strivings and hard work of a somewhat strenuous life have swept away the little that I knew of Russian authors and literature. I am now obliged to walk upon the crutches of translations, though now and then a faint memory is in some mysterious way awakened, and the interest, at any rate, has not faded.

Such names as Turgeniev, whom I once met, Dostoeffski, and the two Tolstoys, have still a magic charm for me. Besides, all the world can prate of them. Of the host of lesser novelists, mostly translated by ladies, in my judgment the less said the better. The work of obviously coarse, un-instructed men, they often, both in their narration and in their imagery, deal with subjects which are unwholesome and which common consent rejects as unsuitable. Literature does not scramble about in midden heaps.

And the great ones—what is their place in the history of the world's achievements? I very much doubt whether there be any among the most

patriotic enthusiasts who would claim even for his beloved Pushkin a seat on Parnassus beside Homer, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, Voltaire. That Karamzin's prose was of the very first order is proved by Pushkin's appreciation of him. Unfortunately it can only appeal to a very small public. Twelve volumes of chronicles, essential to the Russian student of his own country's story, will hardly be faced by the average foreigner.

Pushkin's activities were phenomenal. That in the thirty-seven years of his tragically short life he should have wrought what he did, and that he should have been so uniformly good, invests him with a glamour which is all his own. He was a meteor, and, like a meteor, he appeared as it were for a moment in the sky, and then vanished into space. And yet half a century ago, among the men who were the leaders of thought in Petersburg, there was far less talk of Pushkin than there was of Dante, Shakespeare, or Voltaire—not to speak of many other foreign authors.

It has taken many years to create the revival of the interest of Russians in Russian work. It has come at last, and now the only danger is lest, under much flattery and patting on the back from abroad, the true advance of public taste should not be rather hindered than furthered. Pushkin, be it remembered, was highly cultivated, a man of wide reading. He recognized the fact that in order to write well a man must read well, and study the best

models. Some of his criticisms of Shakespeare and of Byron, under whose influence he was until Shakespeare dethroned his idol, are masterpieces.

It seems to me that the State encouragement of Russian studies will be of high value as promoting facility of intercourse—especially in the case of the Services, naval, military and civil. A far higher, even world-wide importance attaches to the establishment of schools of modern languages all over Russia. It is of less moment that the literature of Russia, in its present condition, should travel westward than that the literature of the West should gradually influence the mind of the Slav. Just as in music the wild barbaric outbursts of his gayer moods, the tender sadness of his dirges, have been enshrined in the harmonies of his own classic masters without losing one spark of their fire, one sob of their pathos, so the untutored writer of to-day, chastened by study, will be able to give us the freshness and zest of a life which is not ours, shorn of all its crudities, not to give them a worse name. Let us not be misunderstood. What I think is of consequence is that the startling audacity, the rough ore of the Slav mind, should be passed through the purifying furnace of the higher education it was in Pushkin's case—all honour to him—and then you will have something worthy of the praise which is being rained upon the shameless translations by ladies, themselves ill-equipped by classic culture, of the cubism of literary art.

CHAPTER VIII

VERBA COMPOSITA

IN the first volume of my "Memories" there is a print of a drawing by William Evans, of the inglenook in the picturesque dining-hall of his house at Eton. Above the stone screen in which it was held was a legend in Gothic letters: "Favus mellis verba composita." The words had disappeared for many years when I went to place my son with Miss Evans—so long that she had even forgotten their existence when I asked the reason why. To us old boys it seemed a pity, for the inscription had derived a certain sanctity from the scholastic storm which raged round it. The learned would not accept the legend. No one could say whence the quotation or proverb came. Dr. Hawtrey, to whom the pure well of Latin undefiled was almost a religion with which to tamper was little short of sacrilege, declared that it was a barbarism, a piece of dog, or, what was perhaps to him as bad, monkish Latin. He maintained that it was untranslatable; but we, audacious monkeys, rushing in where scholars feared to tread, declared that if the words were obscure, the meaning was clear as crystal: "Sweet as the honeycomb is the talk of

friends in council." Here I would fain break off for a moment to pay a slight tribute to the memory of that most generous of men, William Evans, drawing-master and, though one of the most masculine of mortals, technically a "dame." He was a big, burly man, of a jovial and rubicund aspect, a combination which earned for him the nickname of Beeves. He was a vigorous painter in water-colours, a member of the old water-colour society, and one of the best of good fellows.

A sportsman, too, for he was the friend of the late Duke of Atholl, spending most of his summer holiday at Blair, where he was always welcome as an enthusiastic stalker. Indeed, "Scrope's Deerstalking" was the only book that I remember ever to have seen him read. I went to see him once as he lay in bed, very feeble, at the beginning of his last long illness. On the wall, at his right hand, were hanging his dearly-beloved rifle, his powder-flask, and the other paraphernalia of those pre-breechloader days. In his youth he had been a great oarsman, and, indeed, the river was his joy till quite late in life.

He took the greatest interest in all that concerned boating and swimming, and it was owing to his influence, in conjunction with that of the noble Bishop Selwyn, of whom Eton is still so proud, that the law was passed by the authorities forbidding boys to enter a boat until they should have "passed" in swimming. Of the good bishop a story is told

of the time when he was a private tutor at Eton which is worth preserving. He was sculling in a wherry amid a crowd of boats, when he was run into by some unskilled oarsman. Seeing that shipwreck was inevitable, he stood up, and, quoting Ovid's description of the discreet death of Lucretia, exclaimed:

*"Tunc quoque, jam moriens, ne non procumbat honeste
Respicit, hoc etiam cura cadenti erat."*

Fasti II., 831.

And so, with a header as graceful as the quotation was apt, the amphibious bishop that was to be, dived into the Thames amid the plaudits of the multitude, who already recognized in him the heroism of which he was to give proof in New Zealand and elsewhere.

Evans' was a very happy house, and the good old man spared nothing for the comfort of his boys. The table which he kept was excellent, the Sunday dinner quite a little feast, with a glass of sherry for each boy at plum-pudding time—not altogether wise we should perhaps think nowadays, but so kind and so hospitable. Rarely, too, would he fail to invite one or two boys to stay for dessert. The traditions of the house were notably carried on by Miss Jennie Evans after her father's death in 1877. And now she, too, has disappeared, the last of the dames, the last of one of those dear old institutions which were part of the mystery of Eton.

To remember is to wander, and when I begin to

think of Eton—the Eton of seventy years ago—it is easier to ramble on than prudently to stop. But to-day I have only to deal with “Verba Composita.” It is of them that I was thinking this morning as I sat in my Veluvana, and, indeed, there could hardly be a more pregnant thought than that of the talk of friends in council.

How perfect is the feeling with which, in the company of a familiar friend of our own choice, we wander through the shaded paths and sweet groves of our sanctuary. Nor is it necessary that the chosen comrade should be himself a botanist or a gardener. Sympathy is all that is asked of him, and that he will not deny. Indeed, there is something in the worship of the great god Pan, and in the living, growing temples which are raised in his honour, which makes for all that is best in the intercourse between man and man.

A beautiful view, a discreet arrangement of flowers and graceful foliage, will rouse congenial memories of books, of poetry, of pictures, and sometimes even of melody. The sight of a plant recognized even by the unskilled as an old friend of some distant clime, seen again after many years, will excite a whole train of recollections fragrant with the perfume of half-forgotten travels and adventures. So may two greybeards sit happily in some remote nook, the home of fairies and dryads, where the trees whisper old thoughts and call up

sympathetic talk, broken and yet stimulated afresh by "brilliant flashes of silence."

All the better is this *solitude à deux* if there should be the tinkling music of a tiny stream, with the electric gleam of a kingfisher darting across some idle sunlit pool. All these wield that magic power which, for the nonce charming away the wrinkles of time, transports us across the long years back to the days when the world and we were young and life meant hope. Rare, indeed, and very precious are such dreamy talks and silences. We can hardly rate their value too highly. The crazy poet-philosopher Nietzsche was not far wrong when, in a letter to Erwin Rohde, he wrote: "Eternally we need midwives in order to be delivered of our thoughts. Most people go to a public-house, or to a colleague whose mind is solely occupied with the interests of their calling, and there, like so many small cats, they tumble about all their thoughts and tiny schemes. But woe to us who lack the sunlight of a friend's presence!"

It was a fine thought of his to elevate friendship to the rank of a goddess. But, alas, for the inconsistencies of genius! Few of Nietzsche's hot friendships had any lasting power. Rohde himself, Rée and others faded out of his life. But no change was so violent as that which occurred in the relations between the philosopher and the tone-poet Wagner. The historic friendship—born of an admiration for Schopenhauer shared by both, and of an adoration

by Nietzsche of Wagner's music—ripened so quickly and was so beautiful, that it ought to have lived with their lives; but this alliance between a budding youth and an older, already famous man came to the saddest end.

Suddenly the fruit grew mouldy and fell from the tree, and the love which had seemed to be built upon a rock, the worship which was so full of pious conviction, were changed into a hatred which was nothing short of venomous, and which not since the death of Wagner could compel to silence. They had first met at Leipsic, at the house of Professor Brockhaus, and Wagner, touched by the boy's enthusiasm, took to him at once, petted him, and encouraged him to go and visit him, which he did a few years later at Tribschen, Wagner's retreat under the shadow of Mount Pilatus.

Wonderful gatherings, indeed, have been held throughout the ages in groves and gardens. Imagine the Baghavat, the Blessed One, surrounded by his Bikshus, as poor as the first followers of St. Francis, preaching the doctrines of truth and humility in those parables that are dear to the Eastern, seated in one or other of his beloved gardens. Think of the sages of ancient Athens gathered together in the groves of the Akademia discussing the deep problems of existence. How much more instinct with the poetry of life must such grave and reverend companies have been than the boisterous though delightful tavern symposia in

which Christopher North, Tickler, the Ettrick Shepherd and their friends slung Doric wit and wisdom over the toddy glasses! We can easily see how the interchange of thought between the great trio, Wagner, Frau Cosima and Nietzsche, in a lovely Swiss garden, surrounded by the majesty of the Alps, must have been enshrined in such memories as those over which the philosopher mourned so long as the lamp of life burned in him.

When the other day I was reading Dr. Mügge's account of the trio at Tribschen, Wagner, Frau Cosima and Nietzsche, and of their deep interest in one another's ideals, the old motto, "Sweet as the honeycomb is the talk of friends in council," of which I had not thought for many a decade, came back to me, and I understood how Nietzsche, long years after he had quarrelled with Wagner—indeed, shortly before his death—declared that "he would resign all human intercourse, but at no price would he give up the pleasant memories of those days spent in Tribschen." The honey of those *Verba Composita* was still sweet in the comb.

For the quarrel between the two men there may be explanations and excuses; such changes are not without precedent. The first link between them was, as I have said, devotion to Schopenhauer. "Nietzsche called his connection with Wagner his practical course in Schopenhauer's philosophy." When Nietzsche began to dream of a philosophy of his own, the tie between him and the poet-composer

was weakened; there was also perhaps some feeling that he was being made use of, that he was being patronized and made to play second fiddle to a man whom he was beginning to look down upon as a mere play-actor—a mummer—a child of the theatre.

Mügge throws out a hint that in breaking with Wagner, Nietzsche was possibly fleeing from himself, and he quotes a note from him to Frau Cosima: "Ariadne, I love you! Dionysus." Whatever may have been the cause, or the many causes, of the rupture, its violence was, at any rate on Nietzsche's side, maniacal. His venom was not less poisonous than that which Devadatta poured out upon the Buddha. Not content with having hurled his Jupiter, as he called him, from his throne on high Olympus, he must needs pursue him into the depths, trampling on him, and covering with mud the man whom he had once beslaved with the most fulsome adulation. Strange litanies for the high priest of the goddess of Friendship to intone!

Far less intelligible is the change of front in regard to Wagner's music. That the man who, for the apotheosis of Wagner's art, wrote "The Birth of Tragedy in Music," should so completely eat his words as to the worth of the music because he had ceased to love the musician is almost unthinkable.

In the first period he tells us that: "From a novice trying his strength, Wagner became a thorough master of music and of the theatre. . . . No one

will any longer deny him the glory of having given us the supreme model for lofty artistic execution. The renewer of the simple drama, the discoverer of the position due to art in true German society, the poetic interpreter of old views of life, the philosopher, the historian, the æsthete and critic, the master of languages, the mythologist and the myth poet, who for the first time included all these wonderful and beautiful products of a primitive imagination in a single Ring, upon which he engraved the runic characters of his thoughts—what an abundance of knowledge Wagner must have had in order to have become all that!”

Again: “Over the coming of Wagner there hovers a necessity which both justifies it and makes it glorious.” “Wagner, in his capacity as supreme master of form, points out the way, like Aeschylus, to a future art.” “In the life of this great man, the period over which as a golden reflection there is stretched the splendour of a supreme perfection. . . . He produces *Tristan and Isolde*, this *opus metaphysicum* of all art; the *Meistersinger of Nürnberg*; the *Ring of the Nibelungs*; his work of Bayreuth.”*

There is much more in the same strain, but when we come to the second period it is another Nietzsche who speaks. He now attacks his former idol with the most ferocious rancour, for which only insanity could account; and yet that he was not then mad

* Mügge, pp. 131, 134.



FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

From a photograph

is proved by other utterances of his in regard to that same art of music. For instance: "Mendelssohn was the beautiful interlude of German music, quickly admired and then quickly forgotten. Schumann was the last who founded a school. Though incessantly glowing with happiness or throbbing with impersonal suffering, he was a purely German event, and not, as Beethoven and Mozart had been, a European phenomenon."

That—although I should not agree as to Mendelssohn being forgotten—appears to me to be, as regards Schumann, a fine piece of criticism. Apparently it was only when thinking of Wagner that he was up to that time insane. Then he could lash himself into a fury! Witness: "I call the Wagnerian orchestration the Sirocco; Bizet's" (of whose success Wagner was supremely jealous) "orchestral music is almost the sole orchestration that I can still endure. . . . Schopenhauer was the philosopher of decadence. His art is morbid. . . . Wagner has been ruinous to music. Was Wagner a musician at all? He was at least something else in a higher degree—that is to say, an unsurpassable *actor*. Wagner was, above all, a stage-player, and he excels in ubiquity and nullibiety. . . . Parsifal is a candidate for divinity with a public-school education. We are so far pure fools already . . . a typical telegram from Bayreuth: *Bereits bereut* (rued already)! Ah! this old *thief*! This old *magician*! This *Cagliostro* of modernity!

. . . Wagner is a Romanist, and he made the poor devil, the country lad Parsifal, a Roman Catholic. I despise every one who does not regard Parsifal as an outrage on morals."

Perhaps Wagner's faithful disciples were right when they ascribed all outpouring of the vials of wrath to *jalousie de métier*; for Nietzsche, too, was not only poet and philosopher, but composer, and when he submitted an opera of his own to Wagner, the great man, as the Eastern saying is, made sour noses at it.

It is dangerous to carry a book with you into a garden; it will make your mind wander much further than your feet. Here have I been rambling on, carried away not so much by any feeling for Nietzsche, who is, after all, not much more than a name to me, as by the interest which attaches to all that concerns Wagner. For, let his enemies say what they will, he was a man of genius, of most compelling genius, and who that ever had speech of Frau Cosima could avoid being bewitched. To me it has only been given to know her in her old age, but I fell at once under the spell of that most sweet and dainty personality. Very feeble in health, and unable to speak for long, she had retained all the serene charm which, in the heyday of her youth and beauty, earned for her the name of "the unique woman." I felt how bright a part she must have played in the brilliant trio at Tribschen, and how sad it is that there should be no record of the

symposia of the sunny days of that happy friendship before it was disturbed by mad envy and malice.

Of Nietzsche and his tragic end, of the influence which his restless brain exercised upon men and upon letters, this is not the place to speak. Is it he, as his disciples maintain, who has taught Germany and, through Germany, the world to think? The great anti-moralist, as he has been called, is dead. Let him rest in peace. We can leave this *Batrachomyomachia*, this battle of the frogs and mice, the squabbles of German professors and philosophers, coming back with some relief to the sweeter fragrance of our flowers. It was the thought of *Tribschen* and its *Verba Composita* which led us to Nietzsche, and his clever saying that seemed to give value to the thought of friendship in a garden.

Days of happy talk are delightful—never more so than in a garden; and yet it is when we are alone, when our plants are the companions of our solitude, that we really enter into sympathy with them. Then it is that we hold true communion with them, and, giving the reins to our imagination, try to read the hidden secrets of their being—hidden secrets, not those scientific arcana which your professor loves to clothe in slipshod Latin and shabby Greek, but those inmost idiosyncrasies in which our fancy, wildly playful, seems to detect vestiges of the same characteristics and emotions which rule as

tyrants in our own nature. Nor when we note the movements of plants, so strangely purposeful, does it involve any inordinate strain upon our conceptive power to see in them something more than chance, something which resembles the exercise of a dominant will. These may be thoughts at which science laughs, and which the inexorable demon Common-sense hounds out of court—thoughts that are no more than poor little waifs and strays, coming to us from Fancyland, and yet not without their humble value if they do but make us watch and seek for things undreamt of in our philosophy.

That certain flowers and plants are, as it were, types of various qualities is an idea as old as the hills upon which they grow. The strength of the oak, the grace of the willow, the flaunting pride of poppies, the virginal purity of lilies, the stateliness of hollyhocks like courtiers drawn up in a row at the levée of a mighty king, the modesty of the violet—all these and a hundred others are images from the wallets of poets of all lands and of all time. It is not of these that I speak, but rather of the behaviour of plants, often very various and capricious, according to circumstances, yet in which we seem to see a kinship with reasonable motive, a suggestion that in similar conditions we might have done the same.

See yonder crimson water-lily queening it in all the majesty of her amazing beauty among the humbler reeds and rushes and sedges and the rest

of her water-loving subjects. To-day she is in the zenith of her state, like the king's daughter all glorious within. Does she rejoice in the stateliness of her queenship? It would almost seem so, for to-morrow she will feel that her reign is over. She will bow her lovely neck, and, coyly folding her petals together round the golden aureole of her stamens, will disappear under the flood, too proud to let herself be seen when her regal beauty is on the wane. Is not that something like the pride of which we read in the life of the peerless Countess Castiglione, who hid herself from the gaze of men before her charms had faded, as she knew they soon must? Having reigned supreme among the fair women of the world, she would not consent to be degraded into a has-been—a thing of the past. I have told in my "Memories" of the first time that I saw her on the terrace at Holland House, a miracle of loveliness, when all London was crowding on tip-toe to catch a sight of the haughty queen of beauty and do homage to her majesty. My nymphæa tempts me to repeat myself. The last time was a few years later. I was sitting with Mario and Grisi in their garden at Fulham when she was announced. She came in robed in deepest black, her face hidden by a thick veil of sable crêpe. She remained a little while and talked gaily enough, but her face remained hidden all the time; not for one moment did she lift that funereal veil. She had forsaken the world—abdicated—like my coy crimson water-lily,

and in the waters of Lethe she hid her beauteous head.

Have plants their friendships, their affinities? Certain it is that there are some plants which seem to thrive best when familiarly associated with certain others. I have heard some gardeners say, for instance, that lilies of the valley and Solomon's seal are never so happy as when they are planted together. That may be true, but it probably means no more than that both need the same soil and surroundings, and so make the bravest show when they are side by side. I much doubt whether a weak clump of lilies of the valley would be strengthened by adding to it a cluster of plants of its friend, or vice versa.

On the other hand, it is a scientific fact capable of demonstration, that there are trees which press into their service certain humbler non-flowering plants, compelling them to furnish their roots with water and such mineral salts and foods as are needful for their well-being. These become slaves, like the hewers of wood and drawers of water working for the lords of creation.

Many years ago I received a consignment of *Pinus cembra*, the Arolla pine, which is the common growth of the Alps. The trees arrived late in the afternoon, and we unpacked them at once, for the days were at their shortest, and I was eager to get them all planted—there were a dozen or more—before nightfall. To my dismay I found that the

roots were all covered with a network of grey film, the mycelium, as the learned would call it, or some fungus. My gardener and I were not a little indignant with the nurseryman who sent out the plants in so filthy a condition. We sent for a bucket of water and washed clean as many of the trees as we could; mercifully there was not daylight enough left to purge them all of their dirt. To our amazement, the trees which we washed soon began to show signs of sickness; they dwindled for three of four years and looked as if they must die; slowly, very slowly, the invalids recovered. Their unwashed mates never flinched for a moment, made roots gaily, and took quite rapidly to their new home. The puzzle was great, until a few years later I received Kerner's great book, "The Natural History of Plants," and then the mystery was cleared up. The sorrows of the washed trees were those of the planters of the West Indian Islands. Like Mr. Wilberforce, we had deprived them of their slaves. Luckily, the humus of the plantation in which they were placed must have contained the spores necessary to the formation of the fungoid growth, otherwise they would doubtless have died.

Kerner's chapter on the *Symbiosis*, or social union of plants, is curiously interesting. He gives a list of flowering trees and plants which are absolutely dependent upon what he called the mycelial mantle with which fungi cover their roots for the absorption of their daily food. Limes, roses, ivy,

pinks may be propagated by cuttings which will root in pure sand. No such method is possible in the case of the oak, the beech, firs, broom, rhododendron, and a host of others, which demand an admixture of soil containing a proportion of mycelia, without which they are unable to feed themselves; and so, like babies, with neither breast nor bottle they perish.

Kerner's opening words on this *symbiosis* are worth quoting: "In describing the vegetation of a limited area, botanical writers are apt to designate the various species of plants as 'denizens' of the country in question. The conditions under which the plants live are likened to political institutions, and the relations existing amongst the plants themselves are compared to the life and strife of human society." He goes on to speak of the interdependence upon one another of these plants living in the same community; he shows how necessary they are to one another; how they sometimes fight for food, light and air; how some are preyed upon and oppressed by others, "and how not infrequently quite different species join together in order to attain some mutual advantage." And so he comes to the curious history of the lichens.

Some forty or fifty years ago there arose a furious battle around the lichens, humble little creatures enough, plastered on almost every rock and stone and tree in creation. During the 'sixties of the last century Schwendener, a Swiss botanist—professor

successively at Basle, Tübingen and Berlin—wrote a number of papers in scientific publications, in which he proved to his own satisfaction that lichens are not individual plants, but compound existences consisting of an alga and a fungus. His investigations were followed up by one Bornet, and he had a numerous following largely attracted by the charm of novelty and the ingenuity of invention. Kerner went so far as to say that “the continued study of lichens has tended only to secure for the Schwendenerian theory a more wide and universal recognition.” Dr. Cook, however, the great authority on cryptogamic botany, laughs at this mystic union as a “fairy tale.” He treats it with the same contempt that St. Paul, in his letter to Titus, expressed for “Jewish fables.” He says: “The high priest Schwendener thus expressed his dream: ‘As the result of my researches, all these growths (lichens) are not simple plants, not individuals in the ordinary sense of the word; they are rather colonies, which consist of hundreds and thousands of individuals, of which, however, one alone plays the master, whilst the rest, in perpetual captivity, prepare the nutriment for themselves and their master. This master is a fungus of the class ascomyceter, a parasite which is accustomed to live upon others’ work; its slaves are green algæ, which it has sought out, or, indeed, caught hold of, and compelled into its service. It surrounds them, as a spider its prey, with a fibrous net of narrow

meshes, which is gradually converted into an impenetrable covering; but whilst the spider sucks its prey and leaves it dead, the fungus incites the algæ found in its net to more rapid activity—nay, to more vigorous increase.’ ”

Dr. Cook goes on to say: “This may be all very poetical, but it is not very explicit, and needs a commentary;” and then he proceeds to demolish the whole theory based upon the supposition that the gonidia, green spherical cells, which are found in the thallus of lichens are algæ. Lichens, Dr. Cook tells us, consist normally of a thallus, or vegetative system, which is in many species a tough, bark-like expansion, horizontal or vertical, attached to rocks, stones, wood and other substances, but not deriving nourishment from the object to which it is attached. Inside this thallus are the minute green gonidia, and, in addition, there is the reproductive system, consisting of discs borne upon the thallus, containing the reproductive organs (asci and sporidia). The Schwendenerians contend that the thallus and reproductive system are not only fungoid, but actual fungi, while the green gonidia are algæ upon which those fungi are parasitic.

One of the proofs which Dr. Cook brings forward in support of his contradiction of the theorists is the permanence of lichens, whereas the fungi are, as we all know, very short-lived, many of them little more than ephemeral—here to-day and gone to-morrow. To the lichens we must pay the respect

due to the most venerable antiquity. Dr. Cook, speaking with all the authority with which he is endowed, tells us that "some species, growing on primitive rocks of the highest mountains of the world, are estimated to have attained an age of at least a thousand years. Is it not marvellous to think of these mean little vegetable scabs feeding upon air, outliving the monarch oaks and almost all the trees of Creation?"

But I am in danger of rushing in where the angels of science hardly dare tread. Let me go back to my beloved nonsense. Beloved? Yes, for, after all, what is more lovable than nonsense? What a joy their nonsense must have been to Dean Swift, to Lear, or to the little dry chip of a man who was our Cocker, our mathematical tutor, at Christ Church. I wonder whether, when Dodgson, that double personality, always associated in my memory with a blackboard, a piece of chalk and $x y z$, was writing up his mystic algebraical puzzles, his mind did not sometimes wander, and he himself become transformed for a minute into Lewis Carroll seeing visions of Alice, the Carpenter, the Mad Hatter, the Walrus, and all the crazy *dramatis personæ* of his delicious phantasy. He is dead now, and many years ago the lovely child, for whose delectation the wonder book was invented, was laid in an early grave in the Christ Church cloisters. Only Alice lives, and will live as long as the English language remains.

If your garden be upon the slope of a hill, there is one human instinct which you will surely, if you watch them carefully, recognize in your plants. They are so ambitious. Those among them which have creeping roots or rhizomes will almost invariably travel uphill. They are as fain to climb as Sir Walter Raleigh himself. Take the rhizomatous bamboos, such species among the arundonarias as *Somoni*, *Japanica* *Layœkerd*, *Spathiflora* and others, *Phyllostachys fastuosa*, *Bambusa Palmata*. Rarely, indeed, will you find a new culm below the parent plant; all the growth is upwards. And so it is with many other genera. I think the reason of it is pretty plain. You need but to mark the trees above a railway cutting or on the high banks of a deep lane, to see how shallow in proportion to their height are the roots even of the greatest of them. There are exceptions—the vine and the laburnum, to wit—but the oak itself loses its so-called tap-root, which withers and rots away as soon as it has fulfilled its duty of tying the tree in its place. The roots seem to remain as near as possible to the plane of the bottom of the main stem. The same rule applies to plants of lesser stature. Now if the roots of a hillside plant were to move down-hill in the same plane as the axis of the stem, it is manifest that they must very soon peer out into the open and be deprived of all those foods which are necessary to plant life. So they choose the wise course of journeying upwards,

where they are sure, on the contrary, of an increasingly richer diet. If on its travels the growing point of a bamboo rhizome encounters a stone or other obstacle, it will not dive down to avoid it, but will take a direction upwards and then down again into the earth, forming one of those hoops, like croquet hoops, which are such a snare to trip up wayfarers in bamboo forests. Sometimes the ambitions of plants, like those of men, are fatal. The root-stock, originally set in the best conditions, must needs climb higher and higher, until it may perhaps reach some uncongenial place in which it is starved or choked. Then farewell, a long farewell, to all its greatness! By degrees the parent plant becomes exhausted and dwindles away, while the scions which should have carried on the dynasty are hoped for in vain, and so some precious treasure is lost for ever.

If plants have ambition, there is one vice closely allied to it which they do not possess. Jealousy is confined to animals. Men, dogs, cats and horses are jealous. There is no evidence to lead us to suppose that plants are afflicted with that horror of horrors. They may have their loves and their hatreds; they will, as we have seen, help one another, and they will strangle and murder one another. They will even rob one another; but the torture of jealousy seems to be unknown to them. They will attack their neighbors with the pitiless savagery of the old Rhineland robber knights. No

vampire could with more ruthless cruelty suck the blood of a fair maiden than certain malignant fungi, which fasten upon great trees and shrubs, and draw out the sap of their noble lives in order to nourish their own ignominious bodies. Then there are the saprophytes, plants as unlovely as their name, vegetable horrors, which, like the ghouls of the "Arabian Nights," are found feasting upon death and decay. *Non ragionam di lor! Ma grada e passa.*

In the part of the world where I live the old thorn trees are, with the oaks, the glory of the countryside. One year, to my dismay, I saw that all my thorns in which I took so much pride were apparently dying. In the middle of summer their leaves withered and wilted, and they presented a piteous sight. I wrote to Kew for advice. Kew is a never-failing help in trouble. The answer came back: Have you any savin juniper bushes? If so, examine them. You will probably find them covered with a yellow slimy sort of jelly, which is the first stage of a fungus which, in its second stage, fastens upon the thorn. The letter went on to advise a merciless destruction and holocaust of the savin bushes, and prophesied that the fungus on the thorns would die and not renew itself, so that no permanent harm would ensue. Sure enough, in my ignorance, I had planted a number of bushes of savin, which I found, as Kew prophesied, to be covered with an ugly yellow mucilaginous sub-

stance. My inquisition was followed by an *auto da fé* of the junipers; when their enemies were burnt, the thorns recovered and I had no more trouble.

How most other plants hate the beech and the ash! How resolutely they refuse to grow under their shade! And yet even the best hated men have their friends, who will smile to them and seek their company. Lords of beech woods wanting covert for their game should try planting *Laurus Colchica* and *Laurus rotundifolia*. The pheasants love their shelter, and they are quite happy even under old-established beeches.

There are plants of prey just as there are beasts of prey and birds of prey. These are plants which live upon animal food just as we do, setting traps and snares for them with all the cunning shown by one of Richard Jefferies' phenomenal gamekeepers or poachers. What, by the by, is the exact dividing line which separates the poacher from the keeper? Does the one develop into the other as does the chrysalis into the butterfly? I remember a little old Highland stalker, a veteran of the "hull," as brown and rugged as a russet apple; we had been watching deer a long way off all the morning—the wind wrong for a stalk—and he confided to me all those secrets of deer life which seemed as familiar to him as if, like the Buddha, he had been himself a stag in some previous stage of existence. "How long have you been a stalker, Hughie?" I

asked. "Maybe twenty years," he answered; but then, looking up, his eyes twinkling with a craft worthy of Autolycus, he added, "but I was a shepherd for many years before that."

There was a whole folio volume of predatory but illicit sport in the words. Some plants, like the various pitchers of *Nepenthes* and others, remain still and are content to rely upon the beauty of their colours to tempt the game to its doom. Caught in the trap, the victims are held tight by some glue like birdlime, or kept from finding their way out by fingers of sharp teeth like the knives of the Iron Virgin of Nürnberg. Others, innocent, humble little creatures, look "as if they would not hurt a fly." But let the fly beware, and keep out of their grip—"foxes in stealth, wolves in greediness," they are armed like the butterwort (*pinguicula*) with glands which become active at the touch, and secure the prisoner, or as the sundew (*drosera*), equipped with tentacles which close in upon him like a horror in one of Edgar Allan Poe's stories. How these creatures feed and how they digest their meat is told in Darwin's "Insectivorous Plants" and elsewhere. These are facts, not fancies. But what gastronome could take offence if he were accused of being as greedy as sundew!

There is one human quality, the power of enjoyment, which, above all others, we seem to recognize in our plants. It is impossible to look upon the daffodils in a field dancing in the sunlight of an

early April day, without feeling that here is the very embodiment of gladness—of the *joie de vivre*; and as the months speed on and flower after flower bursts into life, meeting the renewed glories of the sun, we have before us a roundelay of gaiety and happiness which only quite ceases when the first grip of winter comes to choke and kill the melancholy glory of autumn. Then, when the dahlias hang their stricken heads, and the blue clouds of the Michaelmas daisies fade and shed their seed, we are conscious of the fact that they, too, have their sorrows, though the tragedy of so many has passed unnoticed when rivals, each one more beautiful than the last, have been springing up to take their place. A greater than I am has noticed the pleasure that plants take in the act of living. A friend sends me these lines of Wordsworth's:

"The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there."

And so we linger on in our Veluvana until the sun is setting in the west. There is an end of light and heat for this day, and the plants, like the birds, must sleep and even dream, if Keats be right.* Theirs is perhaps not the sleep which we know, but nothing is more certain than the change which

* "As when upon a tranced summer night
Those green-robed senators of mighty woods,
Tall oaks, branch-chained by the earnest stars,
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir."

HYPERION, I., 72.

they undergo in darkness. In some plants the leaflets curl downwards, in others upwards; in many the flowers close altogether, and are folded almost as they were when buds. But all green plants show one phenomenon. Whereas under light the leaves take up the air in the little mouths on the underside of their leaves, and after working up the carbonic-acid gas into carbon for the building of their stems and branches, return the rest in the shape of pure oxygen, purifying and sweetening the air; when night comes the process is reversed. Then they retain the oxygen and exhale carbonic-acid gas only, and that is why careful nurses, though they may not know the reason, turn plants out of a sick-room when the night comes on. It has been calculated that of those little stomates on the underside of a beech leaf, little kitchens or laboratories in which the tree prepares its food, there are no fewer than a million. Yes, the plants must sleep—all save certain disreputable night-blooms, which, like owls and bats and witches, hate the light and haunt the darkness. In a few hours the first glimmer of dawn will break; the rosy-fingered goddess will rouse her choir of birds, and they, with their morning hymn, will awaken the trees and the flowers; the blessed dew will fall, distilling the sweet scents of woodland and gardenland, and the joy of the world and of the plants will spring into the birth of a day.

If I were able to accept, as do the pious Budd-

hists, the doctrine of rebirth and the transmigration of souls, I, noting what I have called the purposeful movements of plant-life, should be inclined to go a step further than they do. If a man may have been in a previous state of existence a stag, a monkey, or a snake, why should he not equally have been a tree, a shrub, or a poisonous creeper? The stately dignity of the oak, the sweet virtues of the rose, the venomous juice of the deadly nightshade, are qualities which might be traced in many a reincarnation. The image, at any rate, is found in Ezekiel: "Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches and with a shadowing shroud and of an high stature, and his top was among the thick boughs" (Ezekiel xxxi. 3).

When all is said and done, is it so very foolish, as we sit wool-gathering and drinking in the sweetness of a summer's evening amid the fragrance of our Veluvana, to let our thoughts run riot among the many-coloured clouds of fancy, tracing some faint signs of kinship between the moods of men and the moods of plants? And if, in the indulgence of these whimsies, treating the search for knowledge, not as we English are supposed to take our pleasures—*moult tristement*—we should chance to strike some tiny spark of truth hitherto hidden from us, may we not call in Horace as counsel for the defence and ask:

"—ridentem dicere verum
Quid vetat?"

Enshrined, as it were, in a temple of secular oaks, and other grave and reverend trees, there stands a small mulberry tree, very humble and inconspicuous, having hardly as yet reached the dignity of a shrub. In the late spring and early summer it is surrounded by flaming azaleas, white and deep purple lilacs, and other flowering Japanese maples, with their coral buds bursting into crimson leaves—all the “embroidery” of the Japanese forests, which look as if they had been planted to do honour to the little waif, the radiance of whose pedigree, indeed, outshines all their glory. It is like the beggar-maid at the African King Cophetua's court, but, like that humble maiden, worthy of royal favour above all the flaunting beauties who surrounded that “magnanimous and illustrious” monarch's throne; for that little tree, or tree that, by the grace of Pomona, shall yet be, is an undoubted scion of the tree which Shakespeare planted in the garden of the new home which he built for his prosperous retirement at Stratford-on-Avon. The story is complete in all its details. It has been told by Malone in his life, and recently by Sir Sidney Lee in the admirable new edition of his life of the poet, and is confirmed by what Dr. Johnson told Boswell when they visited Mrs. Gastrell.

In the year 1597 Shakespeare, minded to end his days in his native town, as should become an Armiger of good means, bought New Place, which had been the most considerable house in Stratford;

but the buildings were in ruins, and the poet built himself a new house with three gables, the centre of which carried a shield with the spear, which he adopted as his coat-of-arms. "Shakespeare paid for it," writes Sir Sidney Lee, "with two gardens, the then substantial sum of sixty pounds. A curious incident postponed legal possession. The vendor of the Stratford Manor House, William Underhill, died suddenly of poison at another residence in the county—Fallowgley, near Coventry—and the legal transfer to the dramatist was left at the time incomplete. Underhill's eldest son Fulk died a minor at Warwick next year, and after his death he was proved to have murdered his father. The family estates were thus in danger of forfeiture, but they were suffered to pass to the felon's next brother Hercules, who, on coming of age in 1602, completed in a new deed the transfer of New Place to Shakespeare." Sir Sidney goes on to say that the poet does not appear to have permanently settled at New Place until 1611. In the meantime, he had been busy rebuilding the house and planning his garden. And now for the history of the famous mulberry tree.

Soon after his accession to the throne King James the First appears to have been fascinated by the idea of establishing the cultivation of silk in this country. There was a Frenchman, a native of Picardy, of the name of Forest, who, in the year 1608, "kept greate store of English silk-worms

at Greenwich, the which the king, with great pleasure, came often to see them worke; and of their silke he caused a piece of taffeta to be made" (Malone's "Life of Shakespeare"). This led to the King's planting many hundred thousand mulberry trees in this country, those destined for the Midland Counties being distributed by a Frenchman named Véron. But the King also planted a number of trees south of Hyde Park, at the western end of what now are Buckingham Palace Gardens. These trees gave the name to the famous "Mulberry Gardens," of which I shall say a word later.

It seems that on his return from one of his annual excursions to London, Shakespeare brought back with him a young mulberry tree, and with his own hands planted it in his garden, in which tradition says that he loved to work. What more natural than that the courtier-actor, who was as much petted by King James as he had been in the previous reign, should wish to enrich his Eden with a specimen of the latest botanical craze? After passing through various hands, the house passed back to Sir Hugh Clopton, whose family had formerly possessed it. Sir Hugh pulled down Shakespeare's three-gabled and ugly house, and built one more suitable to his position, where, in May, 1742, Malone tells us that he hospitably entertained Garrick, Macklin and Delane under the poet's own mulberry tree. In 1790 the father of Mr. Davenport's clerk, then ninety-five years old, told Malone that as a boy

he lived in the next house to New Place, and that he had often eaten of the fruit of the tree, some branches of which overhung his father's garden; that it was planted by the poet, and the first mulberry tree to be seen in the neighbourhood.

In 1752 Henry Talbot, son-in-law and executor of Sir Hugh Clopton, sold New Place to a clergyman of the name of Gastrell, a man of fortune and Vicar of Frodsham in Cheshire, apparently an ill-conditioned, quarrelsome man, who was soon in hot water with his neighbours. He had a dispute with the town over assessments, in which, by the by, he was utterly in the wrong, and he so resented the desire of sightseers to be admitted to view the famous mulberry tree, that to spite them and the townsfolk he, in 1758, cut down the tree, his wife urging him to the impious act, as Dr. Johnson told Boswell. She, the Lady Macbeth of this "withered murder," was a daughter of Sir Thomas Aston and sister of Mrs. Walmesley, the wife of Johnson's first patron, and to the lovely Molly Aston, whose beauty so stirred the inflammable Dr. Johnson that the groves and woods of Staffordshire and Derbyshire rang with its praises sung by an elderly Tityrus in a bush-wig. The grand old amorist never wearied of celebrating the charms of his lovely ladies. Even the Island of Skye was forced to resound with the perfections of his Thralia Dulcis in one of the worst Sapphic odes that ever brought wrath upon a fifth-form boy.

At last the vandal parson, irritated beyond measure by his own bilious spite, declared that the house should pay no more assessments, so he pulled it down and broke it up for sale of the building materials. As Shakespeare's own house had been long since destroyed by Sir Hugh Clopton, that did not signify so much, but the murder of the sacred tree was another matter. We may be sure that when Macbeth and Lady Macbeth finally turned their backs upon Stratford, their departure was not bemoaned by their neighbours.

Blessed are the enthusiasts. It is true that they are sometimes egregious bores, but they are never so bad as the iconoclasts, and they do much good in the world. Before the murder of the famous mulberry tree Edward Capell, the Shakespearian commentator, whose work rather fell under the cruel lash of Dr. Johnson, had managed to secure a cutting of it, which he carried to Troston Hall, his place in Suffolk, and planted in his garden. There is no easier tree to propagate than the mulberry; in that respect, it is like the willow. Cut a branch of it and stick it in the ground, and when the spring comes it will begin to show signs of life. Lurking in mysterious hiding-places in the bark are myriads of tiny unsuspected buds, full of life and vigour, which in due season will send down little slender fibres till they reach the soil, whence they derive nourishment; in time the buds will burst their prison of bark, and before many years are passed

a new tree will bear fruit. So Mr. Capell's cutting throve amazingly and gave birth to a little colony of offshoots. How or when I know not, Troston passed into the possession of Mr. Lofft, and he, when about to let the place and disperse his collection of plants, wrote to Sir William Thiselton Dyer, October 6th, 1896, offering "some scions of Shakespeare's tree" to Kew. I at once wrote, begging for one of those scions, that it might be planted in Buckingham Palace Gardens—the site of the old mulberry plantation of King James. What more appropriate home could be found for it? There still stands, by the by, in the Palace grounds a venerable mulberry tree which must be the one last relic of King James's attempt at silk-worm cultivation.

The mulberry gardens were soon converted into a pleasure resort after the manner of the Vauxhall and Cremorne of my youth. Both Evelyn and Pepys mention them and give them the worst of characters. Evelyn calls them (May 10th, 1654), "the only place of refreshment about the town for persons of the best quality to be exceedingly cheated at, Cromwell and his partisans having shut up and seized on Spring Gardens, which till now had been the usual rendezvous for ladies and gallants at this season." Pepys, in his outspoken way, went further in his condemnation some years later. His spades were always spades—yet the sly old dog confessed to having amused himself greatly there. There is in especial a very characteristic account

of a dinner there, given by Mr. Sheres, at which Pepys was introduced to a Spanish Olio, "a very noble dish, such as I never saw better or any more of. This and the discourse he did give us of Spain, and description of the Escuriall, was a fine treat." The entertainment seems to have been managed with an eye to economy, for after dinner they all went off to Brentford, ordering the waiter to set on one side what had not been eaten, and they would come back and have it for supper. What would the head waiter at the "Ritz" or the "Carlton" say to such an order as that? But the evening was spoilt by the sudden indisposition of poor Mr. Sheres, the amphitryon of the Olio, probably the cause of the trouble—though Pepys appears to have returned to the "noble dish" with appetite, issuing unscathed from the temptation.

Sir Charles Sedley, the profligate wit and brilliant writer, of whom Charles the Second said that "Nature had given him a patent as Apollo's vice-roy," and that "his style, whether in writing or discourse, would be the standard of the English tongue," wrote a play called the *Mulberry Garden*, which Pepys, a great playgoer and probably a good judge, damned with faint praise. The "Tribullus of his age," as Dryden dubbed him in his dedication to "The Assignation," for once had failed to score.

The story of Shakespeare's mulberry has led me far astray, and when we get to Evelyn and Pepys it is difficult not to wander on. But I must curb

my prolixity. I think I have said enough to show that the Troston plants have a pedigree which it would defy all the sagacity and learning of the College of Heralds to demolish. Kew, always generous, has continued to propagate from them, and as Sir David Prain, the present director, writes to Sir Sidney Lee: "We have sent plants to places where there are memorials of Shakespeare, and to people interested in matters relating to him." It is to the kindness of Sir William Thiselton Dyer that I owe my special treasure.

I do not know upon what authority is based the statement that the tree now growing in New Place is a scion of the old tree—probably it is. But, in any case, there are offshoots enough propagated by the pious care of Kew from the Troston stock to do away with any fear lest the dynasty should die out.

CHAPTER IX

RUSSIA

THE time which I spent in Russia in 1863-64 was a transition period. Transition periods in history are always difficult to describe, and still more difficult to explain. It is comparatively easy to tell the story of some great concrete fact, a world-encompassing war, a revolution, the upheaval of a dynasty; but to set out the causes which, working during a period of externally unruffled calm, are brewing the hell-broth; to show the hidden powers which are silently operating under the surface to bring about a mighty change—that is a task before which even those who have the best information may well hesitate.

Every skilled newspaper correspondent will, without much difficulty, write a brilliant description of an earthquake with all the harrowing and soul-stirring horrors of the upheaval; but even the most experienced seismologist hardly dares to set on paper his estimate of the mysterious hidden forces, which, battling in the bowels of the earth, unseen and unsuspected, burst out in their wrath to wreak the tragedies of Lisbon or of Catania. So it is with transition periods in history. They are generally

marked by peace and prosperity. There are often no outward signs to sound the alarm that there is trouble ahead.

The political catastrophe, like the earthquake, comes without warning; like the wrecking typhoon, it may be preceded by a dead calm. It will be said with justice that these violent similes do not fit the case of Russia. There has been no great epidemic of violence, no fierce upheaval like that of the French Revolution. Individual murders there have been. The pages of Russian history are stained by cruelty and murder, culminating in the barbarous tragedy of the death of the Emperor Alexander the Second; but the changes which have taken place have been wrought without disturbing the atmosphere of the world at large. None the less, the revolution here has been far-reaching.

The Russia of to-day differs *toto coelo* from the Russia of a hundred years ago. Absolutism died with the Emperor Nicholas, and no Russian Tsar will ever again be able to rule, or even try to rule, without taking into account the will of his people. The relations between the sovereign and his subjects are for that very reason happier than they ever were, and the events of the last two years have shown that loyalty has not perished because autocracy has given up the ghost. The strength of Holy Russia to-day, in the face of the German war of aggression, lies in the determined attitude of the people—in their pious love for their country, in

their almost fanatical belief in their Church, and in their veneration for the great White Tsar who is the head of that Church.

The nineteenth century opened darkly enough for Russia. The Emperor Paul had been on the throne for four years—a gloomy, unhappy man, not without ability, not without the wish to do what was right, until his mind was unhinged by madness. The first acts of his reign were worthy of all praise. He showed kindly feeling, clemency, and even generosity to the Poles, setting free those that had been imprisoned, and making ample provision for their heroic leader, Kosciusko. His edict enacting that the succession to the throne should be determined, not by the will or caprice of the reigning sovereign, but by a fixed and certain law of primogeniture, was a wise measure, calculated to save his country from the intrigues and bloodshed under which she had suffered so long.

But the early days of his reign were embittered by the knowledge conveyed to him by his Vice-Chancellor, Count Bezbarooks, that it had been the intention of his mother, Catherine the Great, to exclude him from the succession in favour of his own son, Alexander. Apart from that, he was a haunted man. Haunted by the murder of his father, Peter the Third, knowing full well that if the hand was the hand of Orloff, the dictating voice was the voice of his mother, Catherine.

Haunted by suspicion, unable to trust any living

soul—if a curtain rustled, stirred by the wind, a murderer stood hidden beneath it; if two courtiers spoke in a whisper, it was a conspiracy; a cough was the signal to a confederate; once when the Empress was talking in a low voice to a foreign ambassador, he bade her speak up, saying: “You may be prepared to play the part of Catherine, but I would have you remember that in me you will not find a Peter the Third.” A terrible speech, showing what he knew of the past, what he dreaded in the future!

His wife, his ministers, his officers, were all under suspicion. He looked upon his court as a hotbed of treason, conspiracy and murder. It was not to be wondered at that in a brain so tortured, the seeds of hereditary madness should have been swift to germinate. Then came all those grotesquely savage edicts which could only be accounted for by insanity. The wearing of trousers, or of a round hat, were crimes to be punished by the knut; short hair without pigtails constituted a criminal offence; ladies must stop their carriages and step out into the snow and mud to salute him when his sleigh or carriage came in sight. Three ladies who disobeyed the order—one of whom was hurrying to fetch a doctor to her dying husband—were seized by the police, carried off to the guard-house, stripped, shaved and whipped. It was clear that the man was as mad as Bedlam, but there were no Anticyræ for Tsars.

Russia took the law into her own hands. A con-

spiracy was formed, with Count Peter Pahlen, Minister President and Military Governor of Petersburg, at its head, to put an end to despotism—a cruel weapon in the hands of a lunatic. The conspirators were men of the highest rank by birth and by virtue of office—Pahlen himself, prime minister and the trusted friend of his sovereign, who delighted in loading him with honors. In the night of the 24th of March they forced their way into the Michailow Palace, surprised the unhappy Emperor in his bedroom and strangled him with his own military sash. He fought with the demoniac fury of a madman, for he was of strong and muscular build, and it was no easy matter to overpower him. He tried to burst into the Empress's apartments, which adjoined his, but here his distrust of her proved his undoing—he had caused the door which led to her rooms to be hermetically fastened. His suspicions closed to him the one possibility of escape, the one refuge with the wife who would not have failed him in his sore need.

Paul's foreign policy was feeble. He detested the French revolution, and yet threw himself into the arms of Napoleon; at other times he was prepared to flirt with England. The most noteworthy of his acts was the edict in regard to the succession to which I have alluded above. Its importance lay especially in the fact that it drove the first nail into the coffin of absolutism. It is evident that an "absolute" monarch, who has been deprived of his

omnipotence in any one particular, ceases *ipso facto* to be flawlessly absolute. Certainly, absolutism did not finally die till fifty-five years later. But a rift in the panoply of the Tsars had been made by the Emperor Paul.

I heard much about the reign of the mad Tsar when I was at St. Petersburg in 1863. There were still some old people who could talk about those days. Count Peter Pahlen had been long dead; after the murder he betook himself to his country place and disappeared from public life. But I had to represent my chief at the funeral of his brother, who commanded the cavalry against Napoleon in 1812, and with a still younger brother, Count Nicholas Pahlen, I was intimate in London for several years. Another link with that time was old Countess Rasumowski, who had been divorced and banished from the Court, but forgiven and taken into favour again by Paul. It was one of his acts of clemency. She was sister-in-law of Beethoven's friend to whom he dedicated the famous quartets. How old she was I know not, but she was a great figurehead in Russian society, and on her name-day all St. Petersburg, from the Emperor downwards, flocked to her house. I had to go, as my chief had a cold, and I represented him. The dear naughty old lady was sitting in state, dressed all in white like a bride, with a wreath of pink roses round her head. That and the rouge with which she had plastered her poor withered cheeks made her look

quite antediluvian. She must certainly have been near a hundred. The memory of Count Ribeaupierre, who was Grand Maître de la Cour, and with whom I was also acquainted, went even further back. He had been page of honour to the Empress Catherine, who died in 1796. These are names only worth mentioning, in order to show that some of my impressions of the unhappy Tsar's reign were drawn at first-hand.

Judging from the accounts given by the few old people who themselves remembered those times, and from the talk of younger men who had heard from their own fathers—perhaps actors in the crime—the whole history of that midnight murder, the outrage did not arouse any excitement commensurate with the horror of the deed. Men had become callous; they had grown used to seeing the rulers of the reigning dynasty disappear by violent or mysterious deaths. What really would have startled them would have been to hear that a Tsar had died a peaceful death in his bed, for murder had come to be looked upon as the natural end of a Romanoff. On the morning of the 24th of March St. Petersburg, awakened to the gruesome news of the night, heaved a sigh of relief, and went about its business. That business was the accession of a new Tsar.

Alexander had been accused of being privy to his father's murder, but from all the evidence which I was able to gather, this was a calumny. There is no doubt that he was in touch with the conspirators,

and that he was a consenting party to his father's removal from the throne. Paul's state was such that not even a son could wish to see his father remain vested with the terrible power of the autocrat of all the Russias. But murder, let alone parricide, was not in his nature. All the acts of his reign gave the lie to so hideous a charge. The man who set free the political exiles in Siberia, who abolished torture from the criminal code of his country, who made it illegal to hold sales of serfs, who helped to extend the blessings of education by founding universities, was a wise and humane ruler. Even the policy which made him countenance the conspiracy against his father was in the interests of humanity. Had he known the extremity to which that plot was to be pushed, we may be sure that he would have fought rather than not interpose his authority.

At the outset of his reign the young Emperor was hypnotized by the glamour of the fame of Napoleon, who was then First Consul and seemed to be destined for the dictatorship of the world. But that crime, and worse than crime, that mistake, as Talleyrand put it—the murder of the Duc d'Enghien at Vincennes in March, 1804—aroused the greatest indignation in the mind of Alexander, and the Russian chargé d'affaires at Paris, was instructed to express that feeling in no measured terms. The First Consul's reply was, in effect, a request that the Emperor would mind his own busi-

ness. A further note was sent, recapitulating the claims and remonstrances of Russia, and M. d'Ombriel asked for his passports.

The tragedy of Vincennes had provoked the anger of Alexander; the coronation of Napoleon as Emperor by the Pope summoned from Rome to do his bidding, on the 19th of November in the same year, called up a totally different but no less hostile feeling. That a Corsican adventurer should robe himself in the Imperial purple and pretend to equal rank with himself, was something which the proud Romanoff could not brook. The disgust and indignation engendered by Napoleon's cruelty and pretensions were enhanced by his territorial encroachments. Alexander threw himself heart and soul into the combination against the French, and Europe was once more ablaze with war until the Peace of Tilsit in 1807, when on board a raft anchored in the river Niemen, the two Emperors fell into one another's arms, kissed, and swore eternal friendship.

It would be outside of the purview of my task to dwell upon this event were it not for the interest attaching to the secret treaty entered into upon that occasion, an instrument the conditions of which were not made public until the year 1834, but which so clearly illustrated the ambitions of both nations. Napoleon undertook that Russia should become possessed of European Turkey, with Constantinople and the outlet into the Mediterranean, and pursue

her conquests in Asia as far as she chose, India being, of course, understood as the objective. France was to have Egypt, Malta, the assistance of the Russian fleet in the capture of Gibraltar—the navigation of the Mediterranean being confined to French, Russian, Spanish and Italian ships. There were other provisions and much detail, but the above were the chief points. The amusing feature of this still-born treaty was that neither party honestly meant business. Each thought that he was jockeying the other, with the firm intention of carrying out no more of it than was for his own advantage. Tomini, who was aide-de-camp to Napoleon,* wrote and told Paris that Alexander had been made to swallow a strong dose of opium, which would keep him quiet for some time, while Boutourlin told St. Petersburg that the terms of the treaty imposed such liabilities upon Russia that it must only be looked upon as a means of gaining time.

Alexander was present at the meeting of the German princes called together by Napoleon at Erfurt in the following year. Napoleon had provided for the entertainment of what it would be irony to call his guests, by summoning from Paris the famous Talma with his troupe of actors. One of the plays chosen was Voltaire's *Œdipe*, and when the player came to the line:

"L'amitié d'un grand homme est un bienfait des Dieux."

*Tomini later quarrelled with Napoleon and entered the service of Alexander.

the gigantic Russian Emperor leant over and theatrically seizing Napoleon's hand, said, "Je n'ai jamais mieux senti!" The stage effect missed fire, for the great little friend was quietly dozing, and had to be aroused to consciousness of what was happening. The "parterre de Rois," the "pit of Kings," smiled and applauded, but the demonstration was a fiasco.

The "bienfait des Dieux" was not long lived. In four short years after the meeting at Erfurt Napoleon made the greatest mistake of his life. He was at Moscow, and there we may leave him, standing on the Sparrow Hill in his favourite attitude, his arms folded, his brows bent, looking upon the barbaric splendour of the fantastic pink towers and battlements of the Kremlin, waiting for the delivery of the keys of the citadel—the keys which never came.

The mystery of the burning of Moscow will never be cleared up. Was the city fired by Rostopchin? Did he even connive at the deed? He himself denied it in a pamphlet published at Paris in 1823, but in my day nobody with whom I spoke on the subject believed him. The general opinion was that this great act of patriotism, which was the beginning of Napoleon's downfall, was indeed his work. He burnt his own country house and destroyed his property, so that nothing should fall into the hands of the enemy—what more consistent than that he should deprive them of all supplies and all commu-

nication by burning the sacred capital after removing as many of its inhabitants as was possible. I have called the fire an act of patriotism. I ought to have said Russian patriotism. The attachment of the Russian to the soil is something sacred. The Mujik has two religions—the religion of God and the religion of the soil. Holy Russia is to him not a mere jingle of words, and Rostopchin, when he punished the sacrilege of the invader, knew that he could count upon having with him the most sacred feelings of his fellow-countrymen. He was, indeed, the typical Russian of his time. The placard which he put on the village church, the only building on the property which he left standing, is characteristic:

“For eight years I have been embellishing this place, and I have lived here happily in the bosom of my family. At your approach the seventeen hundred and twenty inhabitants of this property are leaving it, and I set fire to my house that it may not be polluted by your presence. Frenchmen! I have left you my two houses in Moscow, with their contents worth half a million roubles; here you will find nothing but ashes.”

This, of a surety, was a brave, a determined and patriotic man—a true Russian. He had been a great favourite of the Emperor Paul, and by his sage advice saved that unhappy man from many follies. It was said that had he been at St. Peters-

burg on the fatal 24th of March, 1801, the murder might not have been committed. During the early years of Alexander's reign Rostopchin was out of favour. But there came a time when the Emperor became aware of his worth and courage, and made him Lord Chamberlain and Governor of Moscow. He was a descendant of the great Mongol warrior of the twelfth century, Genghis Khan, and so he described himself in the following lines:

"Je suis né Tatar,
Je voulais être Romain.
Les Français m'ont fait barbare,
Et les Russes Georges Dandin."

There is an excellent article on Rostopchin in the "Biographie Générale," the book that Carlyle used to prize so highly.

The Emperor Alexander the First died in 1825 in circumstances which gave rise to some suspicion. He had left St. Petersburg in the month of December, with the Empress, who was ailing, his object being to take her to a warmer climate. He seems to have been for some time depressed and haunted by the sinister idea that his death was not far off. He was always more or less dominated by the spell of mysticism, and, indeed, it was under the influence of a mystic, a certain Madame de Krüdener, that he was induced to found the Holy Alliance. Before leaving St. Petersburg it is said that he went to the Church of the Convent of St. Alexander Nevski and caused a funeral service to be read. As

he left the town he stopped his carriage to cast a last yearning look upon the city where he had been born and which he loved so well. He left the Empress at Taganrog on the Sea of Azov, and went to the Crimea, where he caught a fever, hurried back to Taganrog and died, not before he was made aware of the discovery of a plot to murder him and the whole Imperial Family.

It is difficult to understand why any Russian should have wished his death. Educated as he had been by his Swiss tutor, the famous La Harpe, in the most liberal principles, in his domestic policy he devoted himself heart and soul to the good of his people. Early in his reign he abolished serfdom in Esthonia, Livonia and Kurland. He introduced reforms into the older universities and created new ones. He promoted the study of science, and gave his active patronage to all the educational institutions in the Empire. He did away with the so-called Secret Tribunal, a sort of Star Chamber, for the arbitrary trial of political offences. Commerce and industry were special objects of his care. He built new harbours and made roads, and in 1818 extended to the peasants the right of establishing manufactories and commercial undertakings, a privilege which up to his time had been confined to the upper classes.

If, later in his reign, he seemed rather inclined to go back upon these liberal principles, it must be ascribed to the poor and unsympathetic return with

which his endeavours were met. The country was hardly ripe for his audacious programme—certainly not for parliamentary government, which at one time he had in view. His own wish was to substitute a constitution for the absolutism which had existed up to his day. He was before his time. Napoleon might sneer at his duplicity and call him “un Grec du bas Empire,” but he recognized his talent and his capacity for governing. The vast majority of his people adored the handsome giant, but treachery and treason were plotting underground, and rebellion broke out, as we shall see, as soon as his soul had left his body. That sorrow he was mercifully spared, though the knowledge that it was coming arrived to embitter his last days.

The Emperor Nicholas came to the throne at a moment when a political storm of the greatest violence was ready to burst. More than one division of the army was known to have been tampered with and to be disaffected, and many of the chief nobles were conspiring for a constitutional government. The warning—or was it more than a warning?—received by the dead Emperor was sufficient to prove this, and there were at that moment special circumstances in the succession to the throne which were markedly favourable to revolution.

Alexander, deeply imbued, as I have said, with mysticism, had a foreboding that he would not be long-lived. He deposited with the Council of the Empire a packet, the seals of which were not to be

broken without his command except in the event of his death, in which case it was to be opened at once and acted upon forthwith. As he died without issue, the Imperial Crown would, in accordance with the law of succession fixed by his father Paul, devolve upon his next brother, Constantine. He, however, was unwilling to reign. He preferred to remain as he was, governor and practically sovereign of Poland. Tsar of all the Russias he would not be. The mysterious packet was found to contain a letter from him, renouncing his claim to the throne in favour of his younger brother Nicholas.

As soon as this was known, Nicholas most scrupulously did all in his power to induce his brother to alter his determination. He even went so far as to proclaim Constantine Emperor. The latter, however, in spite of repeated appeals from his brother, held to his fixed purpose, and Nicholas became Emperor against his own will and endeavours.

The conspirators found in these difficulties a rare opportunity for the attempt to carry out their plans. The interregnum had lasted fifteen days, and it was not till the 24th of December that Nicholas took possession of the Imperial Palace. On the 25th of December he read to the council the final renunciation of the Crown by Constantine, and on the following day he was proclaimed Emperor. That day the conspirators and the rebels assembled in the huge square—the Isaac Place—and shouted for Constantine and ‘his bride, the Constitution,” the

soldiers believing in their innocence that "Constitution" was the name of the Grand Duke's real wife. Nicholas, unarmed, but attended by General Milarodowitch, the Governor of St. Petersburg, and a battalion of faithful grenadiers, and accompanied by M. de la Ferronays, the French Ambassador, left the Palace and faced the rebels. The general, who was greatly beloved by the whole army, went forward and tried to speak with them, but he was at once bayoneted and shot.

The new Emperor showed the greatest courage and patience, and it was not until near nightfall that, the rebels having fired the first shot, he ordered his artillery to put an end to the trouble. Some two hundred men were killed by grape and canister. The five ringleaders were taken prisoners, tried and hanged some months later. One of the Princes Troubetzkoi, who had been foremost in his threats against the Emperor's life, being sent for by the Tsar, threw himself at his feet and implored his pardon. "Sit down," said Nicholas, "and write to your wife at my dictation." The Prince sat down and the Tsar dictated: "My life is spared." The Prince was so overcome that he could write no more. "Now seal your letter and go," said the Tsar; "take your life, and spend it in remorse and repentance."

The remainder of the conspirators, men of noble family, were sent to Siberia—so many of them as were still alive were pardoned and set free

by that generous and noble sovereign, Alexander the Second, on his accession to the throne thirty years later. With the Dekabrists, the "men of December," as they were called, the cry for Constantine was a mere pretext—the seizing of a possible chance. The real object was the abolition of Royalty and the proclaiming of a constitution. Nicholas has sometimes been accused of taking too stern measures against the Dekabrists. With that judgment I cannot agree. He was attacked with armed force, his murder and that of his whole family being the object; he did not strike the first blow. He could not expect to quell a formidable revolution in the army with rose-water. It was no sudden, passionate outburst of a people aching under the sense of wrong. The murderous plot, long meditated and carefully prepared, had been executed in cold blood. His brother lay dead at Taganrog. He and his dearly-loved boy, whom he had left entrusted to sure hands in the palace, were to have been the next victims. The whole conspiracy lay revealed as in an open book. It was all the more dangerous in that it was not a mob riot, but a conspiracy of men of high birth, education and position, corrupting the army itself. Put yourselves in his place. That he was horror-stricken at the massacre was proved by the pathetic cry which he uttered to M. de la Ferronays, the French Ambassador, who never left his side throughout that cruel day: "Ah! quel commencement de

règne." It was to him the skeleton at the feast throughout his life.

Shortly after his accession to the throne the Duke of Wellington was sent to Russia as special ambassador, nominally to congratulate him, but also with the object of inducing the new Tsar to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the Sultan, between whom and the Greeks there was much trouble. The irony of Fate made the Duke take with him as Secretary of Embassy, Lord Fitzroy Somerset (Lord Raglan), the general whose victories twenty-nine years later in the defence of Turkey were to break the proud heart of that same Tsar. It was during these negotiations that Nicholas formed his estimate of the Duke's character, and caused him to cherish in his heart the memory of the great soldier as of a model to be copied. It was then, too, that he first declared that he had no higher ambition than to be a "gentleman," using the English word; and whatever may have been his faults, whatever his ambition, a truthful, honest gentleman he remained to his life's end. To the Duke of Wellington he made no secret of his determination to allow no foreign Power, or Powers, to interfere between himself and the Porte. That was his lifelong consistent policy. If Nicholas was reactionary, if he hated education and opposed the spread of science, if he strained the powers of absolutism almost to the breaking point, he did so openly, and it was the

tragedy of his accession which poisoned his many fine qualities.

During his reign the ship of State was seldom in smooth waters. He sent Prince Mentschikoff to Persia to announce his accession to the throne, with instructions to enter into negotiations for the settlement of the frontier questions which were in dispute. If the maintenance of peace be the proper aim of diplomacy, Mentschikoff was not a successful ambassador. His mission to Persia ended in war, as did his embassy to Turkey more than a quarter of a century later. The Russians, under Prince Paskiewitch, were victorious, and the province of Erivan was added to Russia.

Poland was the chief thorn in his side in 1828; two years after his coronation at Moscow he caused himself to be crowned King of Poland at Warsaw. The ceremonial was gorgeous, and the King-Emperor, invoking the Supreme Majesty of Heaven, prayed that he might govern for the happiness of his people. He also wrote to the Pope, thanking His Holiness for the reception given to the Tsarevitch, promising to "protect the well-being of his Catholic subjects respecting their convictions," etc. That he was sincere in these undertakings admits of little doubt. Unfortunately he was represented at Warsaw by his brother Constantine, who, as his elder, and as having renounced the throne in his favour, had more influence than an ordinary governor would have had. The revo-

tion in Poland broke out in 1830, and Prince Sanguszko, the head of one of the noblest families in the country, people whom I afterwards knew, was one of the leaders. He was taken prisoner and degraded, and his estates were forfeited. It was said that when he was sent to Siberia, the Emperor, with his own hand, wrote that the journey was to be made on foot. When I was in Russia many years later, I had reason to believe that this was not true. The troubles in Poland lasted for many years—indeed, were never extinguished—and they led to gross exaggerations.

I was in Paris as a small boy in 1845, and I well remember hearing all the horrors that were hawked about there, and all the stories of cruelty. Especially I recollect one day how when certain news came to one of the Prince de la Moskowa's concerts—he was the son of Marshal Ney and an accomplished musician and conductor—the pious Roman Catholics present lashed themselves into a fury of emotion over the sufferings of the nuns of St. Basil. It was affirmed that they had been stripped naked, flogged and tortured, and that when they were starving and begged for food their mouths were filled with earthworms. Those were the lies by which the indignation of their co-religionists was aroused by Polish agents. The best informed people did not believe them. That the Poles were cruelly treated, and harshly misgoverned, was certainly to be laid to the charge of the Grand Duke

Constantine. He had inherited the still-living hatreds and the memory of Moscow in the beginning of the seventeenth century. There were old scores to be settled, and his doctrine was an eye for an eye, the *lex talionis* in its greatest rigidity. It would have been a hard matter in any case for the Tsar to bring Russia and Poland into harmony. With Constantine at Warsaw it was impossible—yet the Grand Duke had married a Polish lady.

The affairs of Poland were an apple of discord between France and Russia. The military successes of Nicholas were really confined to the Persian campaign, for although in his subsequent operations on the Danube in 1828 (poor Wallachia and Moldavia), his troops had some success, and even took Varna, the expedition served no great purpose, while it effectually showed the Tsar's incapacity as a leader, for having taken the field in person, he had to return to St. Petersburg a pronounced failure—recognized as such by his own generals.

A civil triumph was the codification of the Russian law, begun in 1827 and finished in 1846, by which the peasants greatly benefited; was the chief feat in internal administration by which his reign was distinguished.

In 1844 the Emperor Nicholas came to England and visited Queen Victoria at Windsor. The object of his visit was twofold. The Queen had received Louis Philippe, whom he hated and despised, and

he was determined to see whether he could not counteract the wily old King's influence. Secondly, the Convention of London of 1841 placed the Ottoman dominions under the protection of the Powers, and this manifestly did not suit the Tsar's book. He had his own views as to the Sublime Porte, and would brook no interference between himself and the Sultan, whose Christian subjects he wished to place under his own shield. That was for him a principle of religion. It was a momentous visit, destined to bear bitter fruit ten years later.

Sir Robert Peel was at this time Prime Minister, and Lord Aberdeen Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. It was only natural that the Foreign Secretary should have much conversation with his Sovereign's illustrious guest, and Lord Aberdeen was, by his gentle and conciliatory manners, the man, above all others, fitted to charm the Tsar, who to the last retained an affectionate admiration for him. Perhaps Lord Aberdeen's deportment towards the Emperor was a little too deferential; at any rate, he left Nicholas convinced that the Russian views as to Turkey were shared by the British Government, and it was with unfeigned joy that in 1852 the Emperor learnt of the accession to power as Prime Minister of a man whom he flattered himself that he had talked over to his way of thinking, and whose peace-loving disposition would never allow him to go to war on behalf of the autonomy of Turkey. That he honestly believed that he had

had such an assurance from Lord Aberdeen cannot be doubted.

In its main features the story of the Crimean War will never be forgotten. The storming of the heights of the Alma, which Nicholas believed to be impregnable, the beating back of the tidal wave of Russian infantry at Inkermann, when my old friend, Billy Hewitt, ordered to spike his guns and retire, answered, "Spike be damned!" and went on firing till they were red hot and the enemy were in retreat—just one gallant deed among many of that bloody battle; above all, the heroic charge of the six hundred at Balaclava, are feats of arms which must set men on fire as long as they have pulses to quicken. But how many men are there nowadays who could give any account of the causes which led to the war?

The quarrels between the monks of the Greek and Latin churches in Palestine seem trivial enough reason to have started so great a catastrophe. The custody of the key of the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, the right to worship in the Church of the Virgin near the Garden of Gethsemane, and the custody of the Sanctuaries of Jerusalem, were the first pretexts of hostilities. That there was in the mind of the Emperor Nicholas a far wider-reaching motive, hardly suspected perhaps even by himself, will be seen presently.

In the year 1740 a treaty concluded between Louis XV. and the Porte, practically gave the care

of the Sacred Places to the Latin Church. To the Greeks certain similar concessions had been made later on by firmans, or edicts of the Sultan, which, however, could not technically be held to over-ride the solemn treaty with France. Louis Napoleon took up the cause of the Latins, and his ambassador, M. de Lavalette, insisted with some violence on the exclusive rights of the Latin monks. The French people at large probably cared little for these squabbles between the rival creeds. But to Louis Napoleon they furnished an opportunity for securing to himself, as Defender of the Faith, a powerful friend in the Church. He wished to arrogate for himself those sacred rights of primogeniture which had been the pride of the Kings of France. It was, moreover, an outlet for that feverish activity which his home policy had made a necessity for him. In the month of December, 1852, a silver star, graven with the arms of France, was deposited in the church at Bethlehem with much pompous ceremonial, attended by the Turkish officials, and the Latin Patriarch with triumphant joy received the coveted keys of the church and Holy Manger.

The fury of the Tsar was terrible. The insult to his Church, which he loved, and the affront to himself, were enhanced by the source from which they came. He had a special horror of all revolutions, pursued to his dying day by the nightmare of the conspiracy of December, 1825, the tragedy

which had inaugurated his reign. The revolutions of France were odious to him. Never would he, in the fullest sense, accept either Louis Philippe or Louis Napoleon as sovereigns equal to himself. Neither of them would he address as "Monsieur mon frère."

And now behold an upstart who was buffeting and opposing him in what he looked upon as the most sacred of his Imperial duties as head of the Church! The spiritual ambitions of the Tsars were hereditary. His father, the Emperor Paul, had been anxious even to don the priestly robes and celebrate the mass; but his wise and brave friend Rostopchin stopped him with a clever conceit. "Sire," said he, "you have no rights as priest. A priest must only marry once; you have been married twice—you cannot be a priest." The mad Emperor was convinced and refrained.

On another occasion the Metropolitan boldly stopped him when he tried to enter the Holy of Holies. Although not a priest, the Russian Tsar is head of his Church, much as the English King is the head of ours, and Nicholas took the position very seriously. It was, moreover, intolerable to him that the firmans which had been wrung from the Porte in favour of the Orthodox monks should be set aside as mere scraps of paper, on account of the more binding powers of a treaty, musty with age, extorted more than a century previously by French chicane from an unwilling or callous Sultan.

He was determined to resist, and Prince Mentschikoff was sent on a special embassy to Constantinople to demand compliance with the Russian claims on behalf of the Greek Church.

Deeply religious and full of zeal for his Church, Nicholas was animated by the same spirit which spurred on the old Crusaders to face dangers and hardships of which we in these days of easy transport can have no idea, in order to wrest from the Moslem those very shrines for the guardianship of which he was striving. No one can doubt that he was honest and sincere in his pious aims. But there was something more. How could he divest himself of the hereditary ambition of Russia? It is true that in his conversations with Sir Hamilton Seymour he spoke only of the occupation, as distinct from the seizure, of Constantinople; but if he once succeeded in establishing himself there in the guise of protector of the Greek Church throughout the Sultan's dominions, would his people ever allow him to give up the city upon which the covetous eyes of all the Russians had so long been fixed? Would he even be willing to do so himself? Only think what it meant: the Black Sea changed from the position of an inland lake; access to the Mediterranean through the straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles; the potentiality of a huge navy ready to dart out upon the world from hidden and unapproachable harbours; a strategic base from which to attack all the maritime Powers of Europe.



THE EMPEROR NICOLAS I

From a lithograph

The temptation would be great indeed. Kinglake summed up the position in a striking and eloquent passage:

“The strife of the Church was no fable, but, after all, though near and distinct, it was only the lesser truth. A crowd of monks, with bare foreheads, stood quarrelling for a key at the sunny gates of a church in Palestine; but beyond and above, towering high in the misty North, men saw the ambition of the Tsars.”

It is not the first time in history that religion has been made to subserve the needs of politics. Martin Luther was spiritually sincere in his attack upon the clerical abuses of the Roman Catholic Church; but the success of the movement was due to the adhesion of the semi-barbarous German princes, who cared little for religion, but caught eagerly at the chance of shaking off the temporal yoke of Rome in their states. So it was in this case. Nicholas was no doubt honestly eager to establish among the Sacred Places of Palestine the supremacy of the Church that he loved; but he knew full well that even the most agnostic of his Boyarin would be ready to draw the sword if Constantinople was the prize dangled before his eyes.

One man, the most considerable personage in the Empire after the Tsar himself, cared but little for the religious side of the contention. That man was Count Nesselrode, the Chancellor. The squabbles between the Greek and Latin monks interested him

in no way, for he belonged to neither faith. Curiously enough, he was a member of the Church of England, having, in December, 1780, been baptized in the Bay of Biscay on board an English man-of-war which had given hospitality to his parents, his father being at the time Russian Minister at Lisbon; and in our communion he gratefully remained till his death, continuing from time to time, as occasion served, never less than once a year, as I have been assured, to attend the services of the English Church. However indifferent he might be to the claims of Orthodoxy, he had, nevertheless, to obey the dictates of his Imperial—and imperious—master; and, of course, to him, as to every Russian, Constantinople was an irresistible lure; still, there is no doubt that his attitude in regard to the war was but lukewarm. He would have avoided it had it been possible.

The historic embassy of Prince Mentschikoff showed the Tsar's hand. The matter at issue was no longer one confined to the custody of a key, however sacred, or to the position of the feet on a crucifix. In the Greek crucifix the feet are nailed separately; in the Latin crucifix the feet are crossed. The Greek crucifix in the church at Gethsemane was one of the matters in dispute. The Latin monks claimed that the crucifix of the Greeks should give place to one with the feet crossed; but these became minor questions when, in the most arbitrary fashion, the prince demanded that the

whole of the Christian subjects of the Sultan should be placed under the protectorate of the Tsar. What this meant will be understood when we remember that it was computed that there were some thirteen millions of these out of a total of thirty-six millions of people, and thus over something approaching a third of the Sultan's subjects the Tsar was to be King. The Porte, well advised by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, peremptorily refused. The Turk was ready to make some concession as regarded the Holy Places, but he would not renounce his sovereignty over any portion of his people. Foiled at every step, Prince Mentschikoff left Constantinople, and the Tsar had once more to see himself outwitted and bested by his old enemy, Lord Stratford.

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe has often been accused of having been the cause of the Crimean War, that great calamity in which, as Lord Salisbury said many years afterwards, "we backed the wrong horse." Nothing could be more false than this charge laid against Lord Stratford, and yet probably nineteen out of every twenty Englishmen, imperfectly instructed as usual in foreign affairs, believe it to this day. The man really responsible for the war was the French Emperor, who, as so often happened during the nineteen years of his reign, was in sore need of the counter-irritant of a foreign war to calm the fever of his own subjects at home. Never was it more needful to him than

at the moment when the affairs of Turkey and the religious demands of the Emperor Nicholas began to be discussed in the chanceries of Europe.

Frenchmen, and, above all, Parisians (do not forget the old saying, "Paris c'est la France"), were still under the terrible impression of the massacres of the *coup d'état* of the 2nd to the 4th of December, 1851. Nothing could better serve the purpose of allaying the smouldering indignation than such a war as that which he saw he could foment, especially if it were carried on in concert with England. Such an alliance would immeasurably increase his prestige both at home and abroad, and, if he could arrange a visit to Queen Victoria, for which he was intriguing, would almost make it appear as if she approved or, at any rate, condoned the wholesale murders of 1851.

As a matter of fact, at the very moment when Lord Stratford was striving with all his might to save England from war, he received instructions from home directing him to order the English fleet to go to Constantinople in company with the French. This was in obedience to the French Emperor, who seemed to have dominated the British Government. Peace did not suit his plans; war did. From that moment Lord Stratford's endeavours were frustrated; war was inevitable.

In the meantime the angry Tsar had sent his army to occupy for the second time Moldavia and Wallachia, those unhappy provinces, the Danubian

Principalities, as they were then called, upon which the curse of Cain seemed to have settled for all time.

Those who have watched the landing of a crowd of Russian pilgrims at Jaffa will realize the power which Nicholas had at his back in the execution of his policy of fighting for the Holy Shrines. I have seen the old people, men and women, the tears streaming from their poor tired eyes, fall down upon their knees, to kiss the soil, the treading of which was the reward of long lives of grinding labour, privation and parsimony. I have seen an old peasant, with matted hair and beard, meanly wrapped in a sheepskin robe, sobbing out his patient heart in an ecstasy of grief at the Holy Sepulchre. In order to save up the money for this pious errand they must stint themselves, they must almost starve themselves, laying up kopeck by kopeck, looking with surety for their reward in another, a better and a less grinding life. The Church has promised it, and God will fulfil the promises of His Church.

Half a century and more has slipped away since I left Russia, and I should have great hesitation in writing down my impressions of the intensely religious character of the Russian people were it not that recent writings by well qualified observers show that those long years have wrought little change. Mr. Stephen Graham's book, "The Way of Martha and the Way of Mary," is a most charming and sympathetic study of the complex psycho-

logical question of the religion of the Russian. Indeed, the only fault with which it can be charged is that the writer is almost too enthusiastic—more Orthodox than the Patriarch. I call it a complex question because it is so difficult to say how far it is pure religion and how far it is only mysticism, but, be it religion or be it mysticism, it is deeply ingrained in the soul of the Russian mujik; it is part of himself, and is revealed in a veneration for which I have found no parallel elsewhere. But the strange part about it is its powerlessness for restraint from sin. The greatest criminal will obey the harassing prescriptions of his Church as though his very life depended upon it. In Lent he will submit to a fast which is nothing short of cruel; even the Mohammedans' fast in the month of Ramadan is nothing to it, for when sunset comes the pious Moslem is free to feast as he pleases. With streaming eyes, in a frenzy of religious rapture, the Orthodox peasant will adore the sacred shrines and cross himself before the ikon, the blessed picture of his patron saint. But that is all. Piety and virtue are two things. The old Budotchnik (night-watchman), who had his hut upon the frozen Neva, would cut a hole in the ice, into which he might throw the body of the wayfarer whom he had murdered, to be carried down to the Baltic; but in the Budotchka (his wooden hovel) a lamp always burned before the blessed ikon, in the presence of which he would count his unholy spoil.

The toper, reeling with the fumes of vodka, before the days of that brave abstinence law of the present Tsar, would never be so drunk as to forget the marks of obeisance due to the sacred image, whose presence he would not hesitate to pollute by any crime. When Nicholas raised the fiery cross of a holy war, he could count upon the fierce valour of an army of fanatics. Death for his religion and for the soil of Holy Russia opens to the Russian the gates of Paradise.

If the religious fanaticism of the people and the ambition of the governing classes was great in Russia, here in England the political frenzy was no less violent. For reasons which they would probably have found it difficult to explain, the people took up the cause of the Turk with the wildest enthusiasm, and the shibboleth, "Balance of Power," was continually in the mouths of men who were quite ignorant of its meaning. In France the desire for war was, as I have hinted, confined to the Emperor and his surroundings; but it was a sad disillusion for the Tsar when he saw the temper of England and of the Government of his friend Lord Aberdeen, a temper which that lover of peace was powerless to resist, the man whom, when he was at Windsor in 1844, he believed himself to have talked over to his views. Trusting to his conversations with the then Foreign Secretary, the Tsar was firmly convinced that England would not go to war, in spite of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe,

whom he hated more than ever for his defeat of Mentschikoff, in spite of Lord Clarendon, and in spite of the fact that at the Colonial Office there was a Minister called Palmerston, who, more than any other man, reflected the spirit of his countrymen, and who, by no great stretch of the imagination, might be supposed to have some little influence in foreign affairs.

During his whole life the chief hobby of the Tsar had been his army. To increase its numbers, its smartness, and its imposing glitter was the object of his most watchful care. But his military aptitudes were confined to those of the drill-sergeant. Company drill, battalion drill, a grand review were his chief joy—a shabby uniform, a button awry, a mistake in some detail of kit were crimes to be suitably punished; no stricter martinet ever existed.* But of strategy, tactics and the science of war, he knew no more than the youngest drummer in one of his pet regiments. Whenever he interfered in any of the wars in which he engaged, he only hindered and hampered his generals.

When it became evident that his occupation of

* The craze for absolute uniformity was exemplified in the Kurros (snub-nosed) Grenadier Regiment of the Emperor Paul. Not only was every nose in the regiment tip-tilted, but the meter-like brass shakos of the old pattern seen in Hogarth's pictures—"The March to Finchley," for example—each has a bullet-hole exactly in the same place. This was to commemorate an attempt on the Tsar's life. The bullet missed him, but found its billet in the shako of one of his guards. Whether the snub-noses and the shakos still exist I know not. They were very conspicuous in my time.

the Balkans was a strategic mistake, he had to call in old Prince Paskiewitch, the hero of his Persian War, to get him out of the scrape. Commissariat, equipment, munitions, transport, and the various subordinate necessities for his army, were matters into which he did not deign to inquire. I do not propose to treat of the Crimean War; I will only say this much: that when I was discussing it one day, in 1863, with a Russian general, he told me that the losses suffered by the Tsar's army in the terrible marches to the Crimea cost them more men than all the fighting put together. Want of food, clothes, boots, medicine for the sick, the robberies of commissariat and contractors, killed the soldiers by tens of thousands. I was bound to confess that our men were not much better off, until my old friend Billy Russell roused the indignation of the people.

In the autumn of 1854 the Tsar declared that he looked to "le Général Février" to finish the war. It did, but not as he hoped. In the month of February, 1855, he died suddenly and mysteriously. The stories which have been published of a lingering death lasting several days, and of touching farewell interviews with the Empress and the Tsarevitch, may be dismissed as fables; I have dwelt upon this in my "Memories." However that may be, whether he died a natural death from influenza, or whether, as many people believed, he took poison, it was a broken heart that killed him. The army

that he had loved, the army that he had made and drilled, clothed and cherished, had failed him. Paskiewitch, whom he thought invincible, had been compelled to raise the siege of Silistria; the battle of Giurgevo had been lost; his troops, the bugbear of Europe, had been driven across the Danube by the Turks. The heights of the Alma, the night of Inkermann told the same tale. Sevastopol was doomed. The proud man was beaten; there was nothing left to him in this life; he laid him down and died—a man of many mistakes, but to the last the great “gentleman” that he claimed to be.

Once again the angel of death was merciful. He was spared the misery of the final and supreme defeat. His impregnable fortress fallen, his button-perfect army on which he pinned his faith shattered, the whole edifice of his hereditary ambition and his pious strivings crumbled to dust!

That Nicholas was greatly feared by his people must be admitted; at the same time, he was admired as something more than a man; and by those who surrounded him, though none came so often under the stinging lash of his displeasure, he was venerated and loved. His domestic life was perfect. He adored his wife—as he once said: “The first time I saw her I knew that I had met the guardian angel of my life.” She was the sister of that poor King of Prussia who was chiefly famous for his dullness and his love of champagne—le Roi Cliquot,

as his Imperial brother-in-law was wont to call him.

Russia had every right to look forward to a happy time under the milder rule of Alexander the Second, who, as Tsarevitch, had greatly endeared himself to the people by travelling through the country, taking pains personally to ascertain what were the wants and aspirations of the millions whom he was one day to rule, and interesting himself on behalf of the political prisoners in Siberia, and endeavouring, so far as in him lay, to soften their hard lot. One of his first acts on coming to the throne was to release so many of the Dekabrist—the men of December—who were still living.

It has been the fashion among writers upon Russia to depreciate Alexander as a weak ruler. They are kind enough to accredit him with a heart full of good intentions, but they taunt him with a lack of vigour of character. It is a hard matter for a Tsar to satisfy the requirements of historical critics. A Nicholas, with a stern hand, puts down a poisonous rebellion which aimed at nothing less than by corrupting the army to perpetrate the murder of the whole Imperial family. He is written down and held up to execration as a bloody-minded, revengeful tyrant. Then comes his son, who at once sets about a vast number of reforms for the benefit of his people, such as the emancipation of the Law Courts from the supreme power of the

politicians, the publication of an annual Budget, the establishment of provincial and district councils, and, above all, the emancipation of the serfs, of which I shall speak later. All these liberal benefits are ascribed to the feebleness of the Emperor, who, as they say, had not the force to resist the persistent demands of ministers. Such is the injustice of men and historians. Nothing astonished me more when I was in Russia than the freedom of speech. I had been brought up in the faith that to criticize the Emperor meant the knut and Siberia. On the contrary, I found at the clubs and in Society men talking, praising and blaming with all the confidence of truly free citizens, little heeding who should hear them, and I soon became aware that all the fables which I had heard of spies and reporters were just moonshine. Even officials and officers in the army unsparingly criticized the measures which they had to carry out and the men whom they must obey.

One of the shrewdest critics of international politics that I ever knew was old Count Nicholas Pahlen, whom I mentioned at the beginning of this paper. A great traveller, and an excellent speaker of modern languages, he had been for half a century intimately associated with all the chief makers of the nineteenth century. He had, moreover, a marvellous memory, of which I may give an example. One day I found him in a great state of mind, fussing and fuming over some annoyance.

I asked what was the matter. He said: "I am losing my memory! I wanted to write down the Knights of the Garter—I remembered twenty-four, but for the life of me I could not recollect the twenty-fifth!" All of a sudden his face brightened. "I have it," he said, "the Duke of Westminster." The honour of his memory was saved. His memory for political facts never failed him, and his judgment was not to be denied. His view of the state of affairs at the end of the Crimean War is given in one of those delightful letters with which Lord Granville used to keep Lord Canning posted in European matters whilst the latter was Governor-General in India. Lord Granville wrote, on the 3rd of August, 1856 (see "Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice's Life," vol. I., page 185):

"Old Pahlen was the most irritable of all on this subject (the Crimean War). He says it has done no one good; not to the English, certainly not to the Russians—and has only been of use to one man in France,* whom he is not, as you know, fond of. He says that in England they considered him as merely speaking like a Russian parrot when he said that the Emperor Nicholas did not wish for war, and that he was considered in Russia almost a treacherous Anglomane when he declared that our Government did not wish it. He had been right in both cases, and yet by extraordinary bad manage-

* The Emperor Louis Napoleon.

ment the war had come. He thinks it will take a whole generation to efface the recollection of it. He attributes the hatred of us, and comparative forgiveness of the French, not so much to the destruction in the Baltic, not so much to our Press and our public speaking, as to our having been old friends, and their always having thought of the French as enemies. He does not believe in any great changes in Russia. The Emperor has good intentions, but there have always been good intentions at the beginning of each reign. He has one great advantage over his father. Alexander during his life told Nicholas nothing. Nicholas, since his son has been of age, told him everything, and the latter, being of a very amiable disposition, heard everything that others did not dare tell his father. He is supposed not to have military tastes, but he issued new regulations about uniforms almost before his father was buried; and he and Constantine appeared in new hussar jackets a day or two afterwards, which were supposed to be foreign, instead of a new dress which he had been in such a hurry to exhibit himself in. He dismissed Klein Michel and another (two great robbers); and when his mother remonstrated on the ground of their having been his father's friends, he made a good answer, which he had probably previously prepared. He said: 'I am not a great man like my father. He could use such men as his tools—I am not strong enough.' He (Pahlen) lays much stress on the absolute poverty



PRINCE GORTCHAKOFF

From a photograph

of Russia in able men. He thinks Gortchakoff clever, but indiscreet, vain, and not successful in things which he undertakes. (This is confirmed by everybody.)

"Tolstoi, a great friend of the Emperor, by whom he is called 'milord Tolstoi,' has no ability.

"Kisseleff, who is named Ambassador to Paris, is clever, but has never been a diplomat and is seventy years old. Meyendorf, really clever, is done up. Chreptowitch is nobody. Orloff himself clever, but perfectly ignorant. He says that Gortchakoff laments to everyone this dearth of men to appoint. So Bloomfield told me. Pahlen says that in England it does not signify if we want a man, we can always pick up an intelligent man in some rank of life or other who will soon master the specialties of his business. In Russia those who are not diplomatists by profession are profoundly ignorant of all that relates to it."

A long quotation—but the appreciation of the state of affairs in his own country by so competent an observer as Count Pahlen, recorded, moreover, by no less a man than Lord Granville, seems to me to justify and even invite its insertion here. I myself knew almost all the men whom the Count mentioned, and I can appreciate the accuracy of his estimate. In two cases, that of the new Tsar and that of M. Tolstoi, I think he was hardly fair. As it turned out, the reign of Alexander the Second,

if by no other measure than that of the liberation of the serfs, marked an important step in Russian history; while M. Jean Tolstoi—the “milord”—who was Postmaster-General in my time, proved to be a capable minister, none the worse for having travelled and being an accomplished man of the world. As Ambassador to England, Count Chrep-towitch, a delightful old gentleman, was not an eagle; and it was not long before the astute old Baron Brunnow—with the

“Baroness Brunnow who looked like Juno”

of the “Ingoldsby Legends”—appeared once more as pilot of the diplomatic ship among the rather difficult shoals of British waters.

Nor at the outset of the new reign was English diplomacy any too strong. England, as Count Pahlen pointed out, was in bad odour at St. Petersburg, and it needed all the exquisite tact of Lord Granville, when he went as special ambassador for the coronation, to conciliate the Emperor, while at the same time firmly giving His Majesty to understand that he must insist upon being received with the courtesy and consideration due to the Queen’s personal representative. Lord Granville’s letters to Lord Canning, quoted by Lord Fitzmaurice, tell the story in the most interesting way.

The glove was of velvet, but the hand was of steel. It was no easy task, for Count Pahlen was quite right when he warned Lord Granville that the

Emperor was deeply prejudiced against England, and had quite thrown herself into the arms of France—a strange infatuation, considering that it was Louis Napoleon's personal ambition and aggressive policy which raised the question of the Holy Places, and was the cause of the war, whereas England did her best—a bad best, it must be admitted—to preserve the peace. Yet France was in high favour, while for us there was as yet no forgiveness. At any rate, Lord Granville's special embassy was a great success, and for years afterwards the Russians spoke with enthusiasm of the English *grand seigneur* who had conquered *à force de plaire* and upheld the dignity of his country. If in some future decade, century, or æon, I, on the eve of a new incarnation, should be consulted by the gods as to the quality with which I should prefer to be endowed, I should have little hesitation in asking to be blessed with the tact of Lord Granville.

Lord Wodehouse, afterwards Earl of Kimberley, who was our Minister at St. Petersburg, was a man of great ability, singularly well read and thoroughly posted in diplomatic lore. He knew his trade, but he had not the secret of treating business with charm. His talents were better fitted to the fuliginous atmosphere of Downing Street than to the bright sparkling air of the Russian capital. It was single-stick, very doughty single-stick, against the light play of the foils. The contrast with that skilful fencer, Lord Granville, was great. But the

victories gained by the latter could only be temporary. He had to go, and Lord Wodehouse remained, a brilliantly dull man—or would it be better to say a dully brilliant man?—quite out of his element in the glittering gaiety of a Russian *salon*. Those who knew his solid worth appreciated his wisdom and scrupulous honesty. But he was rather a great parliamentarian than a courtly diplomatist. When he opened the flood-gates of his talk, it was a Niagara that issued forth, carrying all before it, not to be stopped or stayed, and this deluge was made even more overwhelming by a doctoral or donnish manner, which absolutely staggered the delightfully smart and rather cynical Prince Gortchakoff. As for the Emperor, the voluble envoy frankly bored him. Lord Wodehouse could earn respect for England, but not affection.

Nor was England much better served when his place was taken in 1858 by Sir John Crampton, a most delightful personality, but, in spite of his long experience, little fitted for such a post as St. Petersburg. The truth is that he was a Bohemian of the Bohemians, a man who loved his ease and to whom the donning of a fine coat and a star was little short of torture. I knew him well, for he was a contemporary of my father's in the service, and there were few days—when he was on leave in London—on which he did not knock at our door. He had all the gifts of the Irish raconteur, and his stories were enhanced by the charm of a musical speaking voice

—a great, handsome, leonine figure, with his silver hair and beard, whose advent we always hailed with joy. Probably he was at his best in his beautiful Irish home near Powerscourt, where, with a congenial friend or two—notably old Sharpe, the eccentric Dublin artist—he could sit and smoke after dinner in the same frieze coat that he had worn all day. With us and very few other friends he would sit by the fire, a great tame cat, purring the livelong winter afternoon. However great his personal attractiveness might be, he was certainly not successful as a diplomatist.

When he was at Washington, President Pierce broke off relations with him on account of his recruiting activities—when there were men wanted for the Foreign Legion in the Crimean War. It was the one case in which he overcame his constitutional indolence, and it was not lucky. He had to leave the United States, but Lord Palmerston, always the generous defender of his subordinates, stood up for him, and sent him as Minister to Hanover, at the same time decorating him with the K.C.B., and thence he was transferred to St. Petersburg, a post where the members of the diplomatic body, unless they were prepared to face all the requirements of a delightful but rather exacting society, were bound to become mere cyphers.

That is what happened to Sir John Crampton, and that, too, at a moment when it was very important to bury the hatchet and establish relations

of cordial friendship and sympathy with the Tsar and his ministers. It was at last the tame cat nature to which I have alluded above which brought about his retirement from Russia in 1860, and his transfer to Spain, where at that moment there was little urgency for activity. In an unlucky moment for all concerned, Balfe came to St. Petersburg, with his beautiful young daughter Victoire, who had been engaged at the Opera. Naturally the Irish Minister and the Irish composer forgathered, and Balfe's rooms were a delightfully congenial place, where, when the young lady was not singing at the theatre, Crampton could pass the lazy evenings, free from the cramping fetters of a tailcoat and from all the irksome restraint and exigencies of a diplomatist's life. Balfe, whom I knew well for many years, was himself endowed with all the fascination of Irish wit and bonhomie, while his daughter was as attractive as youth, beauty and talent could make her. They must have been a delightful trio—but the lotus-eating was not to last. There came a day when Balfe, in the character of the *père noble*, told Sir John that his visits must cease—the old story, his daughter's happiness was at stake—and so the veteran diplomatist hoisted the white flag, surrendered unconditionally, and January and May were united for a very brief time, at the end of which the marriage was annulled, and the lady married the Duc de Friar, a grandee of Spain.

When I reached St. Petersburg in 1863, and went through the archives of the Embassy, which were in my charge, I found that there was a dispatch missing. No trace could be found of it and no one had ever seen it. I wrote to London, asking the Foreign Office to send out a copy. When it came, it turned out to be a severe wiggling from Lord Russell, scolding Crampton for not keeping him better informed on Russian affairs. Crampton had burned the dispatch! It was easy for him to do this, for the messenger arrived about ten o'clock at night, and he was in the habit of opening the bag himself, and only sending down its contents to the Chancery on the following morning. This particular document he kept to himself. In 1869 he left the service, and from that time lived chiefly at his Irish home in County Wicklow, where he died, full of years and comfort, in 1886, greatly regretted by all of us who knew him as a dear, kind, affectionate old friend.

Never was there a happier appointment than that of Lord Napier, who succeeded him in Russia in 1860, with the more exalted title of Ambassador, seconded by an ambassadress who seemed to have been born for the position. The British Embassy soon became the most popular centre of society in Russia. John Lumley—afterwards Lord Savile—was First Secretary (what would now be called Councillor), and he was a most valuable aide-de-camp socially to his chief. In these happy circum-

stances the prestige and influence increased every day, until at the end, when Lord Napier, in 1864, was transferred to Berlin, the Emperor Alexander wished to give him the Order of St. Andrew, the Garter of Russia, but unfortunately in those days the acceptance of foreign Orders was strictly forbidden. Queen Victoria was like Queen Elizabeth, who said that she would not allow her dogs to wear any collar but her own.

Few men ever had a much more difficult task than that with which Lord Napier was confronted when he took possession of the Embassy. Not only did he conjure into life a new popularity out of the ashes of the dead indifference, and worse, in which England was held, but he succeeded in winning the personal love and affection of all with whom he came in contact; and this he did in spite of the emasculate meddlings in Polish affairs which were the favourite pastime of Lord Russell and the cynical amusement of Prince Gortchakoff.

It must not be supposed that Lord Napier did not himself openly condemn much that was going on in Poland; but he did so with tact, as an onlooker, and not like Lord Russell, with the appearance of impertinent interference in the internal government of a friendly country. There were, as I have shown in my "Memories," many Russians in high positions who were outspoken in their detestation of General Muraireff, whom Prince Suvoroff did not hesitate to call a "hangman" in the Tsar's presence at a ban-

quet at Tsarskoe Selo. Lord Napier would have cried "Amen" to that. But though he was an uncompromising critic, he never forfeited the goodwill of the court to which he was accredited.

The honour and reputation of England were safe in his hands, and he enjoyed an influence which had been vouchsafed to none of his predecessors. What Prince Gortchakoff and all other Russians resented in Lord Russell was the schoolmaster tone of his dispatches. That Prince Suvoroff's condemnation of the cruelties of Warsaw did not meet with an Imperial reproof was significant enough, and an English ambassador would find plenty of men who would applaud a similar reproof from him. But none of them, even of those who were loudest in their blame, would accept Lord Russell's sermons and prescriptions. The Polish Revolution was a terrible first act in the drama upon which the curtain was to fall in so tragic a fashion.

The liberation of the serfs in 1861 was manifestly the greatest achievement of Alexander's reign—indeed, it was one of the greatest and noblest achievements in the whole history of Society. It was a great upheaval, far more wide-reaching and searching than the abolition of negro slavery which rewarded the humane labours of Clarkson, Sharp and Wilberforce. That only affected the planters of the West Indies. There were no negro slaves in London, Edinburgh, or Dublin. In Russia, on the contrary, serfdom was universal.

There were serfs even among the tradesmen of St. Petersburg, Moscow and Warsaw, and all the great towns—men who had raised themselves by industry and knowledge into a higher status than that of the drudge or labourer, the hewer of wood and drawer of water, but who yet remained serfs, and had to pay a share of their gains to their lords. The fortunes of rich Boyarin were calculated in the souls of men. There had been more than once talk of putting an end to this horror, but it was left to the generous and good Tsar to carry the reform into execution. He was ably seconded by M. Valouieff, Minister of the Interior, who worked out all the details of the scheme. It was no easy task to carry out so mighty a change, for, of course, the vested interests were powerful and the mighty ego was on guard, as ever; but the Tsar was in deadly earnest, and in spite of all opposition, twenty-three millions of dead souls were born again into life.

It was an audaciously bold piece of statesmanship. Even an autocrat is dependent upon the will of others for his power. He cannot stand up in the Agora, and, like a god, proclaim himself "I am that I am!" He needs support, and in Russia at that time, when the proletariat had not yet even the semblance of political existence, the only prop upon which the Tsar could rely was the *noblesse*, and it was precisely their privileges that he was attacking. It needed moral courage, it needed

physical courage, to set such a machinery in motion. Remember who and what were the men who murdered the Emperor Paul. Not a gang of revolutionary *carbonari*—Turgénieff was not yet born and the word “Nihilist” had not yet been coined*—but a band of powerful nobles, headed by his own prime minister. Remember who were the leading Dekabrist, men bearing historic names, proud of their descent from the sacred stock of Rurik. It was men of that importance who would be the most affected by the change, and whose opposition was to be feared. No weak man would have braved them. It is true that emancipation had long been in the air, and that a great number—perhaps even a large majority—of the landed aristocracy had pledged themselves to it. But there was a dangerous leaven of discontent, and none could say how far the taint might have penetrated.

M. Valouieff, the minister who was the Tsar’s right-hand man in this difficult business, was a remarkable personality. Strikingly handsome, tall and dignified, with all the characteristics of blue blood, he was not dwarfed even by the mighty stature of his Imperial master. When, two years after the liberation of the serfs in Russia, the measure was extended to Poland, I was present, as I have related in my “Memories,” at the reception of the Tsar of the peasants’ deputation who came to

* The word “Nihilist” first appeared in Turgénieff’s story, “Fathers and Sons,” in 1861.

St. Petersburg to thank the Tsar. It was impossible not to be struck by the commanding aspect of the Emperor and his minister, both sons of Anak, towering above the rest of the crowd.

The emancipation of the serfs was, of course, Valouieff's masterpiece of statesmanship, but he had several other measures of first-class importance to his credit. It was he who in 1864 established the Zemstvo—elected bodies for the local conduct of provincial business—and another of his achievements was the regulation of the laws relating to the Press. He, moreover, had something of a literary reputation as the author of two or three novels. But these were rather amateurish, and it is upon his statesmanship that his fame must rest.

Like the Chancellor, Prince Gortchakoff, he was very kind to me, and whenever we met in Society, he always had a friendly word for me. When I got back to London, he was next to Prince Gortchakoff, the Russian statesman in whom I found Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon the most interested. They fully appreciated the greatness of his work in the emancipation business, and were glad to have some first-hand impressions of his very remarkable personality.

The emancipation was a colossal task. It is not possible by a mere stroke of the pen to revolutionize the lives of twenty-three millions of men. The serfs were to be freed—that is easily said; but the interests of the landed aristocracy must also be taken

into consideration, and it says much for Valouieff's statesmanship and wisdom that the measure should have been carried into effect practically without any friction.

It was impossible suddenly to deprive of its labour the whole of the agricultural land of that vast empire. There had to be a transition period during which the peasants, though no longer serfs, still remained under certain obligations to their former masters; but within the space of two years the landlords were bound to make over to them their houses with suitable allotments of land against a fair rent, with the further privilege of purchase, with the consent of the proprietor. The obligations of the peasant and his rent were capitalized on a basis of six per cent. Of this capital, twenty per cent. was to be paid at once to the landlord, while the Government gave him the remaining eighty per cent. in Government bonds bearing five per cent. interest, the Government recouping itself for this advance in forty-nine years by a payment of six per cent. from the peasant. The purchases might be effected by single individuals or by partnerships. This would be facilitated by the Russian communal system, by which the members of each commune were able to combine for the redemption money and other expenses.

It was calculated that about one-third of the property of the landed aristocracy, equal to 390,886 square kilometres, was made over to the peasants.

This is Brockhaus' calculation. He goes on to point out that for various reasons, chiefly the ignorance and intemperance of the peasants, there were not a few troubles arising out of the great economic change. Although in some instances land soon rose in value fifty per cent. above the estimate of 1861, in others it suffered great deterioration.

There is one feature in this great economic change which is worthy of note. If we read the lives, memoirs and correspondence of the ministers who have ruled England in modern times, it is impossible not to recognize an underlying element of personal ambition in all their contentions. That, I take it, is inseparable from a constitutional Government where the "Outs" are always struggling to become "Ins." Here there was no such motive possible. A Tsar of Russia could become no greater than he already was, and even the minister who did his behest had nothing to fear or to gain from the *arbitrium popularis aurae*. The Emperor had, and could have, nothing in view but the good of his people, and for that those who saw him at work knew that his efforts were untiring. It is strange that it should have been precisely in the reign of so good a monarch, a real benefactor of the world over which he ruled, that the seeds of the poisonous plant of Nihilism should have germinated, spreading like the virus of cancer, which, cut out of one place by the surgeon's knife, still travels through the system and reappears in some new spot.

Nihilism was not confined, as has been popularly supposed, to the students of the universities and a few clever but discontented literary men and artists. As a matter of fact, it had invaded all classes. The civil service, the army, the police—even the secret police—were infected.

The diplomatic negotiations which took place at St. Petersburg in the winter of 1863-64 were big with the fate of Europe and of the world. It was the result of the grievous blunders made by Lord Russell that Prussia was enabled to take the first step in that career of plunder and aggrandisement which has wrought such terrible tragedies. I have dealt with that story fully in my "Memories." I was at St. Petersburg at the time, and owing to my confidential relations with Lord Napier, and to the kindness of Prince Gortchakoff and other Russian ministers, I had the opportunity of being well posted, not only in what took place publicly, but also in the feeling which was prevalent in Russia in regard to the Danish war.

In his brilliantly fascinating fourth volume of the "Life of Lord Beaconsfield," Mr. Buckle* revives the time-honoured fallacy that Russia was not ready to join hands with us in defence of Denmark. That fallacy can only owe its existence to the careful handling of persons whose aim it was to white-

* "The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield," Vol. IV., p. 342.

wash Lord Russell. It is true that his blustering and bullying in the Polish Revolution—followed by the eating of the leek with appetite—had made England very unpopular in Russia; but in regard to Denmark there was another motive at work, and a very powerful one, in the prospective marriage of the Princess Dagmar to the Tsarevitch.

In principle, Russia did not want to go to war, but she was ready to sacrifice her wish for peace if only England would join in with her and cry "Hands off!" to Prussia and Austria. England did not want war in July, 1914, but on the 4th of August war was declared. The cases are exactly similar. In both cases a "scrap of paper" was torn up by Prussia, who only a few months earlier had guaranteed the integrity of King Christian's dominions. In 1914 mercifully Lord Russell had been long "resting and being thanked" over the mischief he had wrought. Sterner and more chivalrous doctrines prevailed, and this time England was ready to draw the sword for a principle of honour.

It is, I know, an absolute mistake to suppose that if we had carried out the policy indicated by Lord Palmerston in Parliament at the end of the Session of 1863 we should have stood alone. Russia would have been with us. Our position, supposing we had gone to war, would have been all to our advantage—as Lord John Manners pointed out, it would have been "the most popular, the easiest and the cheapest war (for it can be managed by our navy alone) of

the century.”* Lord John Manners was quite right. We should have sent our navy to Danish waters, and we need not have sent out a single soldier.

To march upon Berlin would have been a mere holiday task for the Russian army, a sort of picnic, like our march upon Magdala. But I can assert that it was the firm conviction of the best informed diplomatists of Europe that the mere knowledge that England and Russia were determined to uphold the rights of Denmark would of itself have sufficed to avert war. I have written elsewhere how, when Lord Napier had to tell Prince Gortchakoff that England would not join with him, the Prince answered: “Alors, milord, je mets de côté la supposition que l’Angleterre fasse jamais la guerre pour une question d’honneur.” That was the conviction which guided him in all his subsequent dealings with England, the advances in Central Asia, in defiance of all treaties, until the gates of Afghanistan were reached, and in 1870, when France was crippled, the tearing up of the Black Sea Treaty obligations of 1856.

Mr. Buckle is so clear-minded a critic of foreign politics that I should hesitate to differ from him were I not possessed of absolute knowledge not from hearsay. A study of the “*Origines diplomatiques de la guerre de 1870*” can only confirm what I have said; and that exhaustive publication

* Buckle’s “*Life of Disraeli*,” *ut supra*, Vol. IV., p. 343.

proves up to the hilt my contention that since the origin of the war of 1870 was due to the betrayal of Denmark in 1863-64, it is to the grave political blunders then made that we must ascribe the outrage of 1914.

Free of England and Russia, Bismarck was able to carry out his full programme: (1) Kiel and a navy. (2) The crippling of Austria. (3) The humiliation of France. (4) Who can doubt what that was? The destruction of England's sea power, and the world under the heel of Prussia.

Lord Russell's meddling and muddling in the affairs of Poland had, it is true, estranged Russia and France. But the former Power was, nevertheless, keenly in favour of Denmark; as regards France, there was perhaps another consideration which was not without its influence. It is a matter of common knowledge that Louis Napoleon was very ambitious to build up a navy which should be able to hold its own with ours. In the "*Origines diplomatiques*" there is published a dispatch from the French chargé d'affaires at St. Petersburg, M. de Massignac, a very clever man, with whom I was intimate, urging upon M. Drouyn de Lhuys the expediency of furthering the views of Prussia. He pointed out that the success of Prussia would give her Kiel, and enable her to build a navy which might, in given circumstances, help the other Continental Powers to destroy England's preponderant supremacy at sea! I am inclined to think that this

view may have had more restraining influence with Louis Napoleon even than the snubbing with which Lord Russell met his proposals for a conference or congress at Brussels. We know, moreover, that the Emperor had a distinct leaning towards Prussia, which he looked upon as making for progress in contradistinction to Austria, which in his eyes was antiquated and retrograde.

It was, then, at St. Petersburg that the fate of Denmark was sealed and the first triumph of Bismarck's policy secured. The Danish Duchies were stolen by Prussia, and, as my old friend M. de Massignac had foreseen, the foundations were laid of a navy which up to that time had been a dream in Cloudeuckooland. For the shameful abandonment of Denmark we are now, fifty years later, paying the just penalty.

THE END

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: 4/1/2002

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